THEORETICAL AND DISCUSSION JOURNAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY

SEPTEMBER 1963

Marxism Today

EDITORIAL COMMENTS

R. PALME DUTT — PROBLEMS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNIST MOVEMENT

WILLIAM WAINWRIGHT — CATHOLICS AND COMMUNISTS

DAVID CRAIG — CHAOS AND LONELINESS—MODERNISM IN LITERATURE

DISCUSSION:

MICHAEL SHORT — WHAT DOES MUSIC EXPRESS?

RAYMOND SOUTHALL — THE LOGIC OF AESTHETIC APPRAISAL

MARGOT HEINEMANN — SATIRE—THE NEW REVOLT?

STEPHEN SEDLEY — SONGS OF THE RADICAL AND LABOUR MOVEMENT

Monthly 1/6

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Marxism Today

Vol. 7 No. 9

CONTENTS

		page
	Editorial Comments	257
R. PALME DUTT	Problems of the International Communist Movement ...	262
William WAINWRIGHT	Catholics and Communists ...	267
David CRAIG	Chaos and Loneliness—Modernism in Literature ...	271
Jack WODDIS	A Correction	279
DISCUSSION:		
Michael SHORT	What Does Music Express? ...	280
Raymond SOUTHALL	The Logic of Aesthetic Appraisal	281
Margot HEINEMANN	Satire — The New Revolt? ...	285
Stephen SEDLEY	Songs of the Radical and Labour Movement	286

AMONG ARTICLES IN OCTOBER AND FORTHCOMING ISSUES

Andrew ROTHSTEIN	Stages of British Foreign Policy
Betty MATTHEWS	Building the Communist Party
M. A. COHEN	Some Thoughts on British Poetry Today
Frida KNIGHT	The French Resistance
Arnold KETTLE	Literary Criticism

Editor James Klugmann

Editorial Board

Professor J. D. Bernal
Emile Burns
Gabriel Carritt
Maurice Cornforth
Maurice Dobb
John Gollan
Jack Hendy
Arnold Kettle
John Lewis
Frank McKenna
John Mahon
Alan Morton
Professor George Thomson
Charles Watkins

Editorial Correspondence
James Klugmann
16 King Street, W.C.2

Advertisements
Doris Allison,
above address

Orders and Subscriptions
usual agents or
Central Books Ltd.,
37 Gray's Inn Road,
London, W.C.1

Subscription rates
Six issues 10s. 6d.
Twelve issues 21s.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Editorial Comments

SOME British trade unions and federations of trade unions are eagerly discussing the merits and demerits of long term wage contracts—an idea imported into this country from the United States of America. Some Right Wing leaders have enthusiastically adopted the idea without really knowing why, just as many British Tories a year ago adopted the idea of the Common Market, without really knowing the reason. Still, as the idea is in the air, Marxists had better become closer acquainted with it.

The ideas behind this policy are discussed in *Wage Policy and Long-Term Contracts* by Joseph Garbarino published by the Brookings Institute (U.S.A.).

The policy first emerged in the course of negotiations between General Motors and the United Automobile Workers in 1948. It is not recorded whether anyone said "What's good for General Motors is good for the Automobile Workers" but that was clearly the idea in the minds of the G.M. negotiators.

Like nearly everyone else, the American monopolists had expected a really big economic crisis immediately after the war, which would enable them to put the trade unions in their place. When no crisis on the expected scale emerged, they recognised that they would have to arrive at some permanent arrangements with the unions. One of the things that irked the General Motors management was the more or less annual demand for wages increases. After these wage demands were tabled there were months of unrest, strikes and threats of strikes until a settlement was agreed to and then a new round of wage demands was begun. True during such unrest the unions were able to recruit and expand but that in the eyes of the G.M. management was an additional reason for disliking such procedures.

Why Not Long Term?

So the proposition was put forward why not an agreement which runs for several years, and in which small increases in wages are given? This would at any rate eliminate the annual bout of labour unrest.

In 1948 a wage agreement was arrived at which provided for (1) small annual increases in wages and (2) a further rise in wages if the cost of living rose. In 1950 when the Korean War broke out and a rise in retail prices began, a further agreement on the same lines was signed for a five-year period.

After 1955 many other long term agreements were signed in American industry, though the employers have now succeeded in many cases in forcing the unions to drop the cost of living clause.

Has the long-term contract benefited the American workers to the extent that Right Wing leaders in Britain are claiming that such contracts will help the British workers?

In the Motor Industry Mr. Garbarino states: "No-one can know what would have happened in the industry under other circumstances but the results of the formula wage policy in Autos would seem to have been not very different from the results that would have followed from a continuation of annual wage bargaining." On the other hand the employers definitely benefited for "between 1950 and 1961 there were only three full-fledged negotiations and . . . these reduced the 'exposure' of the industry to large-scale strikes very substantially".

A British Example

One of the recent long-term agreements in British industry has been made for the electricity contracting industry between the National Federated Electrical Association and the Electrical Trades Union. In justifying this agreement before the National Incomes Commission the employers denounced the previous leadership of the union and lauded the present leadership to the skies.

> "Very great stress was laid by the Association on the bad relationship between it and the Electrical Trades Union since the war and on the subsequent serious industrial unrest which had occurred during the years when the union was under the control of its former leadership.
>
> "Within the last twelve months the control of the union had passed into other hands at National Joint Industrial Council level. The Association was of the view that the Executive of the union as now constituted, was prepared to fulfil at the shop floor level the pledge given as part of the new agreement of co-operation to secure *inter alia* full utilisation of hours of work, the achievement of maximum output and the elimination of all forms of time-wasting. *Although this pledge was made by the Union as part of a former agreement, this time there was a vital*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

difference because of the change in the leadership of the Union." (italics ours).

In this long term agreement—it runs for three years and four months—the cost of living clause has been struck out. "The agreement contains no cost of living variation clause. This is in the National interest" the employers boast. But is it in the workers' interest?

This agreement runs for three years from July 1963 and makes no allowance for an increase in the cost of living. Yet in the last three years this rose by over 5 per cent. Surely no trade union executive is daft enough to believe that all rises in the cost of living have stopped or that prices are likely to rise by less than 5 per cent in the next three years. Why then sign an agreement which cold-bloodedly refuses to protect the workers against this eventuality?

For the reasons given above it is clear that there are considerable disadvantages in a long-term agreement even when it does contain a cost of living clause. But a long term agreement without one is a ghastly let-down of the workers. Yet we are in danger unless the workers awake, of seeing such agreements concluded in other industries.

Education in Marxism

With the holidays now mostly over an important side of the work of the Communist Party now begins. This is the annual programme of Party educational activities which is planned from September to September.

The programme for the school year September 1963 to September 1964 was adopted by the Political Committee of the Communist Party in July. It includes ambitious proposals for educational activity, catering for new and for older members, for branch officials and for full time Party workers. It makes proposals covering many sides of educational activity, including weeks residential schools, three-day residential schools, the provision of material for advanced reading and study by members of the Party.

In the forefront, however, of all the Party's educational activity for the months ahead is study of the new syllabus—*Communism and the World Today*. This treats such basic problems now under discussion in the international Communist movement as "The New Epoch in which We Live"; "Problems of Peaceful Coexistence"; "Problems of Transition to Socialism"; "Problems of the National Liberation Struggle". In nearly all districts of the Party plans for making this the basis for Party education are well advanced. Special schools for members of District Committees, Day and Weekend Schools for active Party members, have been arranged throughout the Party and the first edition of 5,000 copies of the syllabus have been speedily sold out.

The plan includes proposals for six residential weeks schools for selected nominees from Party districts, also for the holding of three-day residential schools in different parts of the country for districts which are geographically close to one another. In addition, it is proposed to hold a further Holiday School in 1964 in view of the splendid response to this year's Holiday School on *Marxism and the World Today*.

Additional educational material, new syllabuses on *The Communist Party and the Labour Movement* and on *The State*, advanced reading programmes for self-study on such questions as *Marxist Philosophy*, *Political Economy* and *The State* complete a programme which should mark a big advance in the Marxist-Leninist educational activity of the Communist Party.

"*Africa, the Way Ahead*"

This month Jack Woddis's third book on Africa (*Africa, the Way Ahead*, Lawrence & Wishart, 21s.) appears. His previous two books, *Africa, the Roots of Revolt* and *Africa, the Lion Awakes* (also published by Lawrence & Wishart, price 21s. each) have won wide praise both here and abroad. Translated editions of one or other of the two first volumes, and in some cases of both, have now appeared in Spanish, German, Polish, Hungarian, Russian, Rumanian, Japanese and Chinese, and production is in hand of editions in French, and in both Czech and Slovak. There is also a separate edition published in the United States.

In *Africa, the Way Ahead*, Jack Woddis examines the problems now facing Africa as the tide of national independence sweeps over the continent, and gives his assessment of the way these problems are likely to be solved in the coming period. In essence his argument deals with the question: Will the independent African states, now that they are being established, go on to complete their liberation, avoid the 'normal' capitalist path and open up the way to socialism, or will they fall victims to all the intrigues of neo-colonialism and become a sort of 'Latin American hinterland' of the imperialists?

In giving his views on this all-important question, Jack Woddis examines the various arguments now current in Africa regarding the way to socialism, the question of social classes in Africa, neo-colonialism and the way it operates, the theory and practice of the African states in struggling for economic growth and economic independence, the one-party systems and traditional forms of democracy, Pan-Africanism and the 'African Personality', African unity, the policy of non-alignment, and Africa's role in the fight for peace.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

George Thomson's 60th Birthday

On the occasion of his sixtieth birthday (on the 19th August), Professor George Thomson was presented with a volume of studies, entitled *Geras*, published by the Charles University of Prague. The articles in the volume, which amounts to 300-400 pages, have been contributed by fellow scholars in the field of Greek and Roman antiquity from many countries. Articles have been printed in the language of contributors with a summary of each in Czech. Professor Thomson was honoured with membership of the Czechoslovak Academy of Science in 1960. The presentation of this handsome volume does him further honour and at the same time enhances the reputation of the Charles University as one of Europe's major centres of learning. The contributions, from Marxists and non-Marxists alike, are of a high scholarly standard. The definitive and up-to-date bibliography of George Thomson's works is a measure of the careful preparation of the volume.

George Thomson's writing are known in many lands and he has exerted a wide and profound influence in many fields, as Aeschylean scholar, textual critic, literary critic, historian, philologist and translator. His stature as a creative Marxist is widely recognised. The Charles University deserves warm congratulations for the publication of this fine symbol of affection and esteem, from colleagues in many countries.

The biographical introduction to the book concludes with the wish that George Thomson may continue to add to his already remarkable corpus of writings for many years to come, after a general survey of his political and scholarly career. This survey takes account of each of his major works, which include the translation from the Irish of *Twenty Years A-Growing* by Maurice O'Sullivan; his first book *Greek Lyric Metre;* his edition of the *Prometheus Bound* of Aeschylus; his massive two-volume edition of the *Oresteia* of Aeschylus; the only surviving Greek dramatic trilogy; his *Aeschylus and Athens*, inspired by the belief that, in our age, the new humanism, enriched by the four most eventful centuries in history, is Marxism; his *Studies in Ancient Greek Society*, the first of which was concerned with the *Prehistoric Aegean*, expanding in detail the first part of the thesis of *Aeschylus and Athens*, in particular the transition from tribal society to the State, and dealing with such fundamental topics as matriarchy, land-tenure, Aegean pre-history and epic poetry: and the second volume of *Studies*, *The First Philosophers*, concentrating on the growth of slavery and the ideas of the early natural philosophers, viewed as a link between primitive thought and scientific knowledge; and also his *Greek Language*, based upon historical linguistics, and designed to introduce the student to the riches of the Greek language, and the literature and history of the Greek people, over a period of nearly three thousand years—Greek being the only European language offering so long a historical perspective.

The introduction further notes that in all these works there is a unity of method, an imaginative sense of the movement of history, the interplay of economic, social ideological and artistic forces. The sense of the combined notion of complex forces is allied with a skilful and subtle application of dialectical method, based upon a sharp analytical grasp of essentials.

Professor Thomson has been, since its foundation, an active member of the Editorial Board of *Marxism Today*. We should like to take this opportunity to wish him and his wife Katharine Thomson, every success for the future.

Soviet Philosophy

Our colleagues in Paris "*Recherches Internationales à la Lumière du Marxisme*" ("International Research in the Light of Marxism") do not aim to produce a magazine of Marxist work published for the first time. On the contrary, their policy is to translate already existing works and articles, and to publish them, grouped together on particular subjects, in their bi-monthly issues.

In the 36 issues to date they have covered a great diversity of subjects translated from a great diversity of languages. There have been numbers, for instance, on such questions as "The Origin of Fascism", "Linguistics", "The Second World War", "Music", "The Cosmos", "Sociology", "Black Africa", "Cybernetics" and "Latin America", to mention only a few.

One of the most recent issues (a double number, No. 33-34) is devoted to *Soviet Philosophy*, and is a heroic attempt to extract from scores of journals, books, and learned publications, a representative collection of articles and extracts from books and reports by Soviet philosophers.

The first article in the issue is by M. Mitin, on "The 22nd Congress of the C.P.S.U. and the Tasks of Marxist-Leninist Philosophy" and it indicates some of the main fields of discussion and research to which Soviet philosophers are turning their attention. In a report dealing with "Stalin and Philosophy", P. Fedosseev attempts to estimate the positive and negative sides of Stalin's contribution to Marxist philosophy. There is an interesting article by Valentin Asmus on "The Dialectics of the History of Philosophy".

In recent years there has been a considerable literature in the West on the young Marx and in particular on his philosophical ideas, on his conception of alienation. It has become a favourite

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pastime to try and use the young Marx against the older Marx, Marx versus Engels, etc. Much of this was discussed in an earlier issue of *Recherches Internationales* on the "Young Marx" (No. 19). But there is an important article in this issue, too, by Teodor Oizerman on "The Problems of Alienation in the Youthful Work of Marx—the bourgeois Legend of the Origin and Essence of Marxism".

Other articles treat such subjects as "Communism and the Individual", "The Dialectics of Abstract and Concrete in Marx's 'Capital' ", "The Concept of Contradiction in Dialectical and Formal Logic", "Contemporary Atomism—the Concept of the Elementary Particle". And at the end of the issue is a useful short bibliographical study of recent works by Soviet philosophers and of new editions of some older works.

"*The Beginning of the Road*"

Under this title MacGibbon & Kee have published an important and moving account by Marshal Vasili Ivanovich Chuikov of the Red Army's defence of Stalingrad.[1]

The Marshal was himself in command of the 62nd Army which ground the German offensive to a standstill on the banks of the Volga during those decisive days twenty years ago. Outstanding is his ability to make the complex military situation comprehensible to the non-expert reader. But this is far from an account of purely military tactics, for even more vivid than the picture of Chuikov the soldier, the picture emerges of Chuikov the man.

His command post was virtually in the front line throughout the battle, and the front line was a mere 200 yards from the Volga. Once, when Front H.Q. was trying to get in touch with him during a German attack in order to find out whether the Soviet H.Q. still existed in the city, he and his Chief of Staff, when contact was finally made, were asked where they were. Without prearrangement, they both replied, "We're where the most flames and smoke are."

Chuikov's contact not only with his own staff and other army officers but also with the rank and file Red Army men was extremely close and consequently he is able, out of his own experience, to depict the day to day struggle in so vivid and human a way that it is hard to put the book down. The individual instances of bravery given are so numerous that the reader gets a picture of what mass heroism means in practice.

But there is no glorification of death or war. The attitude towards it is well expressed by one of the company commanders who told his men, "The hero is the one who dies wisely and courageously, bringing victory nearer. But doubly heroic is the one who can defeat the enemy, and live!" It is difficult to say if this book is more interesting to those of us who remember the battle of Stalingrad and were aware of its significance at the time it took place, as the turning point of the Second World War, or to those who will read it as history.

[1] Marshal Vasily Ivanovich Chuikov—*The Beginning of the Road,* MacGibbon & Kee, 45s.

More on Film Finance

The saga of the production costs of the film *Cleopatra*, as well as getting cynical reactions has also focused some public attention on the many problems of film finance; therefore, no apology is needed in returning to this subject, which we dealt with in these notes in June. As explained then, the Film Finance Corporation is a films bank that loans part of the money needed to make a number of the British pictures seen on our screens, and reference was made to the opinion that almost all the money available for such loans was out working, and that loans for further films would have to wait.

This view is confirmed by the publication in July of the NFFC's Annual Report for the year ended 31st March 1963, which said that their funds were almost wholly deployed and uncommitted resources amounted to only £90,365, compared with £337,320 a year earlier. The Report also stated that the Corporation had asked the Board of Trade for powers to increase the funds at its disposal, but, if refused, "the Corporation will unhappily have no choice but to cut back its lending activities severely during the current year, and thus hamper the chances of the growth of British film production for world markets."

This aspect of films as a national asset in trade terms—a point of obvious political merit, when appealing to the Government—is seen in a different manner elsewhere in the Report, where it is pointed out that, not only have the costs of film-making risen in recent years, but those designed for the international market tend to be on a grander and more expensive scale; it adds that a strong and well-based home market is essential.

But some British film producers have raised another issue that affects film financing: for a film to be successful, it is virtually essential for it to be shown on either the Rank or the ABC circuit of cinemas; those producers associated closely with either Rank or ABC usually get a quick booking on the circuit, the date sometimes even being announced before the picture is finished, but outsiders, when fortunate enough to get a circuit deal, may have to wait several months before their picture is shown. While they wait, the interest on the loans that they have incurred in producing the film go on ticking up like a taxi-meter running riot in a traffic jam.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Meanwhile, the money associated with the big monopoly interests is circulating far more rapidly, and so further strengthening the position of the big fish. (It must be emphasised that not every film shown on the circuits is a financial success, whether made by producer—British or American—closely associated with that circuit or not).

On a "Cleopatra" Scale

As well as being engaged in film production, the two major organisations are, of course, closely associated with other forms of entertainment, and one need only mention in passing the links between Rank and Southern Television, ABC and ABC Television, both Rank and ABC tenpin bowling interests, and Rank's 23 Victor Silvester Ballrooms; these two as well as other film interests have been making forays into other developing forms of mass pastimes. Rank, seeing that, even if not as many workers here own cars as in the United States, we are a "car-owning democracy!", has gone into the petrol pump business; responding again to social needs, the Rank Organisation has also gone further afield and opened some laundromats.

And now comes news of a big new development, in which Associated British Picture Corporation is joining forces with Billy Smart Ltd., and Butlins Ltd: they are to build Europe's first Marineland at Southsea, near Portsmouth. Press reports of the project reveal that Marineland will be developed on an 11½ acre site on the sea front close to Southsea Castle, the first sections being scheduled for opening to the public in 1964. The scheme is on a "*Cleopatra*" scale, and a trade paper reports that it:

> "will be a vast ocean stadium, with covered seating for 1,800 people in which will be presented daily Marine Revues featuring dolphins and whales in aquatic displays. Other features will be an ocean area around which 3,000 people will be able to watch performing sea lions and porpoises . . . a giant fish bowl containing 500,000 gallons of water and 4,000 sea creatures. . . . There will be landscape gardens with rock pools, waterfalls, a sharkrun and grottoes, and a children's zoo."

Marx's Daughters

The Dietz Verlag in Berlin has recently published a short popular book by two Soviet writers—Olga Worobjowa and Irma Sinelnikowa on *Karl Marx's Daughters*.[2]

All Marx's daughters—Jenny, Laura and Eleanor—were active fighters in the socialist movement, but for us in Britain it is particularly welcome to have a short study of Eleanor Marx-Aveling who played so important and devoted a part in the British socialist and Labour movement from the mid '70's to the end of the 1890's.

In the 50-60 pages devoted to Eleanor we can at least catch a glimpse of her work as organiser, agitator, educator. We see her helping her father in every possible way until his death in 1883, and in regular correspondence with leaders of the international movement, like Wilhelm Liebknecht and August Bebel in Germany, the Russian economist Danielson, the Dutch socialist Domela Nieuwenhuis, with her two brothers-in-law Longuet and Lafargue in France.

She was active in all types of campaign of solidarity with arrested or persecuted national liberation or socialist leaders. The book describes her work with the French exiled Communard Prosper Lissagaray on the journal *Rouge et Noir* which he edited in London. Later she translated into English Lissagaray's famous book on the Paris Commune. Or again you find her at the end of the '70's and beginning of the '80's, actively supporting Michael Davitt and the Irish Land Leaguers.

A leader and foundation member of the Social Democratic Federation and of the Socialist League which broke away from it, Eleanor was particularly active in the British trade union movement, specially in the great task of the end of the '80's and beginning of the '90's—the organisation of the unskilled and unorganised workers. Thus you find her to the fore in the Bryant & May Match Girls' strike, the strike of the Gas Workers (she did very much to help the political development of Will Thorne) and on the Strike Committee of the great Dock Strike.

In all the big demonstrations of those days you would find Eleanor in the front line. She was there in Trafalgar Square on Bloody Sunday— in hand-to-hand conflict with the police, but suffering, wrote Engels, not much more than the loss of her coat and her hat. She was one of the main organisers of London's first May Day in 1890 and one of the speakers there on the International platform.

She visited the U.S.A. and wrote a book on the American working class movement, wrote on the British Socialist history and many theoretical articles. She represented British workers at different congresses in France, Germany, Switzerland, Belgium, and at Congresses of the Second International. She kept at it without relaxation until her tragic death in 1898.

Reading this short study, one realises that more still is needed—a full length study of Eleanor Marx and her role in the British Labour Movement. Allen Hutt did some pioneer work on this, but this gap in our literature of Socialism remains to be filled.

[2] O. Worobjowa and I. Sinelnikowa—*Die Töchter von Marx*", Dietz Verlag, Berlin, G.D.R.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Problems of the International Communist Movement

R. Palme Dutt

THE new world situation has given rise to sharp controversies in the international communist movement. This is understandable, since the tremendous new possibilities and opportunities opened out by the changed balance of world forces in the current epoch have called for new, positive and bold responses, set out in the Declaration of the Eighty-One Parties, in our own party programme *The British Road to Socialism* and Congress decisions, and in the new Programme (replacing that of 1919, which has been fulfilled) adopted by the Twenty-Second Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union two years ago.

1. Problems and Controversies

The path forward is not simple and easy. It never has been. As always, there are plenty of contradictory features in this current world situation or in the internal situation within each country, defying simplified straight-line analysis by formula, and requiring the most serious tactical judgement in each concrete situation. It is only necessary to consider the obvious two aspects of the present policy of American imperialism illustrated in the June 10 speech of President Kennedy for a relaxation of the cold war, directed to answer the anti-Administration right-wing critics suspecting a "New Yalta", followed immediately by the Berlin sabre-rattling tirades; or the signing of the Test Ban Treaty (denounced by all the most bellicose cold war champions as a betrayal), followed by the offer of nuclear know-how to France and the pressing forward of the multilateral nuclear force project which would bring the West German militarists very close to the final control of nuclear arms. Or the hostility of the Paris-Bonn Axis, allied in this respect with the American Ultra-Right, to the Test Ban Treaty, but reflecting at the same time, in the case of de Gaulle, a measure of resistance to American domination in the satellite countries of Western Europe. Or the complex political situation in India, with the Anglo-American imperialist grip closing in, utilising the pretext of the Border, while Nehru struggles to cling to the tattered remnants of the flag of "non-alignment", the reactionary monopolist offensive drives for full Western imperialist alignment, and the Communist Party is dangerously divided, with a considerable proportion of its leading members suffering persecution. Or the varied trends in the Arab Middle East, with reactionary bourgeois nationalism in Iraq and Syria combining the slogans of "Arab Socialist Unity" with the most infamous anti-communist terror; Nasser tacking and manoeuvring; the Ben Bella Government in Algeria showing certain positive and progressive signs. Or the unique problems of the present stage in Africa, with the giant advance of All-African liberation registered at Addis Ababa, alongside the absence of Communist Parties in most of the countries, and the trend to seek expression of the united national front in a one-party system, discussed by Jack Woddis in the August number of *Marxism Today*. Or, for that matter the political situation in Britain, where it is urgently necessary to speed the defeat of Toryism and the return of a Labour Government, alongside Communist M.P.s, although, on the basis of present official Labour policy, a Labour Government would mean, as in 1945, the entrenchment of the reactionary cold war Nato nuclear policy.

Contradictory features of this kind are not new in principle in the present world situation. In one form or another, such contradictory features (alongside and complicating the essential basic contradictions of the epoch) have characterised every stage of the world socialist revolution. That is why the science of Marxism-Leninism is necessary in order to track the path forward through the morass, determine the decisive point of concentration for advance at each successive stage, and refuse to be side-tracked by picturesque generalised slogans. Hostile critics have always tried to take advantage of the particular contradictory features, to throw mud and abuse, raise would-be profound queries and dilemmas and seek to create confusion. But the successive critics have always fallen by the wayside and passed into oblivion; the caravan moves on. Marxism-Leninism has again and again been proved, and continues to be proved, by the event, by practice.

All these new problems of theory and practice

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in the present world situation need the most careful consideration and discussion. Our syllabus *Communism and the World Today* has been prepared to assist in such clarification and discussion within the party.

2. How Not to Conduct Controversy

But such serious consideration is not helped when the presentation of a critical viewpoint with regard to a responsible tactical decision of the Soviet Government, as in the signing of the partial Test Ban Treaty, descends (in the Chinese Government's statement of July 31 to which reference is made in our party's Political Committee Statement of July 31) to the type of commonplace abuse long familiar in certain anti-Communist and anti-Soviet quarters—the customary denunciation of the Soviet Union as having "sold out" the revolution, as "allying with imperialism to oppose socialism", etc.

For nearly half a century the Soviet Union has led the way, during the first twenty-eight years as the sole socialist state confronted with a hostile capitalist world, in the first victory of the socialist revolution, in the defeat of all its enemies, in the building of socialism and now entering on the first steps of the construction of communism, and in opening the gates to the establishment of the world system of socialism and advance of national liberation. Throughout all these years the Soviet Union has fought in the forefront for the common aims of all progressive mankind, for peace, for the independence of all peoples, for socialism.

Throughout all these years every new move of the Soviet Union, every unprecedented initiative to meet new conditions, and every tactical manoeuvre in this long and arduous path, has been met with a chorus of denunciation, not only from the enemies of socialism and communism, but also from some professed "friends" of communism or "experts" in Marxism-Leninism, discovering in each new move a "betrayal" of the sacred principles of communism and Marxism-Leninism. The Bolshevik Revolution was itself denounced by the most widely recognised pundits of Marxism at that time as a violation of the principles of Marx. The Brest-Litovsk Treaty was denounced as the betrayal of international socialism to German imperialism.

The New Economic Policy in 1921, introducing freedom of trade, when Lenin offered to lease tracts of Soviet territory and resources to foreign monopolists to exploit, was proclaimed to signify the end of the communist revolution and Lenin's surrender to world capitalism. The battle to build "socialism in one country", as soon as it was clear that the conditions were not yet ripe for the victory of the working class revolution in the rest of Europe, was denounced as the "betrayal" of the world socialist revolution, in place of being seen as the positive revolutionary path forward in these conditions, in contrast to the defeatism of the alternative viewpoint which sought to cover black pessimism about the prospects of the Soviet Union with abstract formulas about world revolution. The Soviet-German Non-Aggression Pact let loose all the vials of wrath to denounce this "betrayal" revealing the Soviet Union as "the ally of Hitler and fascism" against the peoples of the world.

It is an old story; but there are always novices in world politics to whom it comes as a new blinding revelation the first time, and who can be temporarily thrown off balance. Indeed, judging by the numbers of times the world revolution has been "betrayed" by the Soviet Union, according to these pundits, it is remarkable how both the world socialist revolution and the Soviet Union have advanced in the world during these years.

3. The Chinese Revolution and the Soviet Revolution

The Chinese Revolution is the second great socialist revolution of our time, following the Bolshevik Revolution of 1917 and the victory of the peoples over fascism in 1945. The Chinese Communist Party and its leaders, with Comrade Mao Tse-tung at their head, have won the admiration and honour and affection of Communists all over the world for their brilliant and victorious leadership of the Chinese people's struggle through all the vicissitudes of the revolutionary battles of over a quarter of a century to the final establishment of the Chinese People's Republic fourteen years ago. Their heroic and indomitable creative leadership and struggle and the courage, enthusiasm, collective determination and tenacity of the Chinese people, during these fourteen years to grapple with the giant task of transforming one quarter of the world for the construction of socialism (whatever the mistakes made and admitted along the path, and there were mistakes also in plenty in the Soviet Union made and recognised in the difficult path of socialist construction) is an imperishable part of the epic of the transformation of humanity in our time.

The special hatred of American imperialism for China is a tribute to the Chinese Revolution. When we are considering the present ideological and tactical disputes which have arisen, we must never forget the sharp international situation in which the Chinese People's Republic is placed: the continued refusal of recognition and maintenance of an open state of war by American imperialism,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with its colossal armed, naval and nuclear power deployed along the Pacific against the coasts of China, and with open threats of aggressive intentions proclaimed through its puppets. Nor can we fail to note the way in which the most reactionary circles of imperialism have openly speculated on the present moment and the present disputes as a favourable moment for sharpening aggressive pressure against the Chinese People's Republic. Equally we need to recognise our responsibility, as emphasised in the Political Committee statement of July 31st, to intensify our fight for the rights of the Chinese People's Republic in the United Nations and in the international conferences of the powers.

But when the Chinese Government and Communist Party in this situation turn to denounce the Soviet Government as having "sold out" the revolution, as seeking to maintain a "nuclear monopoly" of "nuclear powers" (thus equating socialism and imperialism), and as having become an "ally" of American imperialism against China, then it becomes necessary to say plainly, as our Political Committee statement made clear, that such language and such an estimation is, in our judgement, incompatible with any communist viewpoint, and indeed contrary to the plain interests of the Chinese people themselves. For the unity and co-operation of the Soviet and Chinese peoples is the indispensable foundation for the strength of the whole world socialist camp, just as the strength of the Soviet Union has been through all these years and continues the most powerful international guarantee for the security of the Chinese people.

The Chinese Revolution is the child of the Soviet Revolution. The Chinese Communist Party was first founded in 1921, four years after the victory of the Bolshevik Revolution, from the most advanced elements of the national revolutionary movement in China, inspired by the example of the Soviet Revolution and Communist Party, just as our Communist Party in Britain was similarly founded in 1920 from the most militant socialist and working class representatives and organisations in Britain, inspired by the example of 1917. The Chinese Communist leaders have always, at any rate until the most recent period, recognised their debt to the Soviet Union. They have always recognised the Communist Party of the Soviet Union as their teacher. It is possible that a pupil may advance beyond the teacher, though the concrete evidence for that needs to be visible. But a pupil should show some sense of decency before proceeding, as from some lofty height of superiority, to berate the teacher with very foul abuse, especially when that teacher is the vanguard party of the world socialist revolution, bearing the heaviest burden and having to face critical responsibilities of decision in every daily changing aspect of the whole international situation.

For those of us who have longer experience in the Communist movement, who called ourselves communists before the Bolshevik Revolution and pledged support to it before its fulfilment, the degeneration of a critical opposition viewpoint, which might at the outset have some valid points to make, into abuse of the Soviet Union and its leadership as having "sold out" the revolution and joined up with imperialism, is a familiar story in a variety of forms over four and a half decades, and a sure danger signal. But for more recent comrades this spectacle of public division between the two major governing Communist Parties, with one great socialist power accusing the vanguard socialist power of betrayal, is not only painful, as it can only be a source of deep pain to all who have the cause of communism at heart, but can also cause bewilderment and confusion.

4. The Controversy and Our Party

Our party is not a governing Communist Party or one of the major mass parties in the international communist movement; and the conditions for the fulfilment of our programme to lead the majority of the working class and people of Britain to political power and the construction of socialism are not yet present. At the same time we operate in a country which was the cradle of capitalism and the working class movement, from whose midst our party was formed; which is still a leading industrial country, whose highly organised working class has its role to play in the world; and which is at the same time the metropolis of a leading imperialist power whose tentacles spread over the world. Placed in this situation we have recognised, although a small party, our special international responsibilities. We have always sought to fulfil to the utmost of our strength, however inadequately, our role of active comradeship and practical solidarity with the great liberation struggle of all the peoples oppressed by British imperialism. Our bonds of friendship and comradeship with the Chinese people and Chinese Communist Party were forged by such as George Hardy, or when Harry Pollitt received his crippling back injury at the hands of jingo hooligans while publicly denouncing the *Amethyst* aggression.

In the great issues of the international communist movement we have always sought, throughout these four and a half decades, to reach our

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

independent judgement, to the best of our ability, and present our independent viewpoint, within the framework of international solidarity. When all the records and the archives finally become available in the future, the truth of this claim will be proved.

Despite the ideological differences, when the Indo-Chinese Border conflict arose in the autumn of last year, we had no hesitation in denouncing, on the basis of the concrete facts known to us, the imperialist lies about Chinese aggression and in exposing the real responsibility of Anglo-American imperialism and pro-imperialist reaction within India which was deliberately exploiting the border dispute, inherited from the old expansionist strategy of British imperialism, to instigate and foster conflict in order to destroy Indo-Chinese friendship, strengthen the imperialist economic and military grip on India, and disrupt the left in India.

In the controversies developing during the last four years, after the agreed Declaration of the Eighty-One Parties, when these controversies reached the stage of public polemic between major parties and at the Congresses of leading parties, we took steps, by the January resolution of our Executive this year, by our sending of delegations both to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and to the Communist Party of China, and by our Congress resolution, to adopt a line which we hoped could best serve the interests of the international communist movement. While making clear our viewpoint on the ideological controversies, and expressing in temperate terms our disagreement with the new contentions put forward in documents of the Chinese Communist Party, which we regarded as not in accord with the agreed line of the 81 Parties' Declaration or the requirements of the present world situation, we placed our main emphasis on the necessity to restore and strengthen the unity of the international communist movement, end the public polemic, and seek to resolve the differences on a principled basis through comradely discussion between parties, leading up to an international conference of Communist Parties provided that the ground were sufficiently prepared to offer the prospect for a successful and united outcome and not the occasion for intensifying the danger of a split. As part of this preparation we urged the desirability of talks between the representatives of the Soviet and Chinese Communist Parties.

5. A Dangerous New Stage in the Controversy

Since then the talks between high-level delegations of the Soviet and Chinese parties opened on July 5, and were adjourned on July 21 without any date fixed for a further meeting. From this it was evident that the issues had not yet been resolved, and no ground had been found for a common statement even of the measure of agreement existing, while holding over questions in dispute. On the other hand, adjournment, or a "recess", as it was called, was better than a direct breakdown and termination of the discussions; since adjournment implied the recognition by both sides that the dialogue must be eventually resumed, and that differences between communists should be settled in a communist fashion, by comradely discussion. Time was needed, both to enable the present exacerbation of controversy (and sometimes unfair vulgarisation of the issues on both sides, as often happens in the heat of controversy) to cool down; and for time to provide that unfailing test of events and practice which so often resolves initially disputed questions, shrivels up false theories, and proves the justice of correct theories.

Meanwhile, however, new factors had arisen which in fact brought back the public polemic in a sharpened form, despite the declaration in principle by all parties affirming the desirability of its cessation. On June 13th, within three weeks of the talks, the Chinese Party published, in the form of a reply to the Soviet Party letter of March 30 welcoming the prospect of the talks, a 25-Point Statement entitled "A Proposal Concerning the General Line of the International Communist Movement", outlining their position in a highly polemical form. As it was now the eve of the talks, and publication would have inevitably involved an answer and therefore the resumption of sharp public controversy at the very moment when the private talks were due to open in order to replace public polemic by a friendly informal exchange of views across the table with a view to resolving the differences, the Soviet Party held over publication until it had become clear from the talks that there was no immediate prospect of agreement. On July 14th the Soviet Party published the Chinese 25-Point Declaration together with an Open Letter to their membership explaining their view of the differences. These two documents, which are available in our party bookshops, provide a summary of the two opposing viewpoints in the controversy, and should be studied by those who wish to acquaint themselves more fully with the issues.

While the Soviet-Chinese talks were proceeding, the long awaited Three Power Conference on a Test Ban Treaty opened in Moscow on July 15, and a partial Test Ban Treaty was initialled on July 25. From the outset the Chinese Party and Government took a hostile view to these negotia-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tions and the proposed partial Agreement, and the Chinese press publicly warned the Soviet Government against falling into the "trap". After the initialling of the Treaty, the Chinese Government on July 31 took the unprecedented step of issuing a public statement in which, alongside the demand for a Summit Conference for complete nuclear disarmament (along the lines of four concrete proposals identical with proposals already put forward by the Soviet Union), they denounced the partial Test Ban Treaty as "a fraud" and denounced the Soviet Government as having "sold out" the Soviet people and the peoples of the world and "allying with the forces of war to oppose the forces of peace, allying with imperialism to oppose socialism". Subsequently the *People's Daily* described the Treaty as a "U.S.-Soviet alliance against China".

This direct and public denunciation of the Soviet Government by the Chinese Government, accusing it of betrayal of the revolution and of alliance with United States imperialism against China, created a new and dangerous situation, far exceeding the previous very sharp ideological controversy. With regard to the Test Ban Treaty we had already made clear in our Political Committee statement of July 25 our support for it, in common with supporters of peace all over the world, as a step forward in the long fight for nuclear disarmament, opening the way and calling for renewed efforts to carry forward the advance. This new situation created by the Chinese Government's statement and anti-Soviet accusation compelled our party to state its position, both to reaffirm support of the Test Ban Treaty and to repudiate the very shameful anti-Soviet calumnies. This was done in our Political Committee statement of July 31.

Since then, further serious developments have taken place with the Chinese Government spokesman's statement of August 15th on the question of nuclear weapons. This statement advocated the extension of nuclear weapons to other socialist countries ("the greater the number of socialist countries possessing them, the better the guarantee of world peace"). This advocacy of the proliferation of nuclear weapons failed to take into account the obvious fact that such a policy would play into the hands of the imperialist aim to extend nuclear arms to West Germany, Japan, Chiang Kai-shek and similar reactionary militarist regimes, thereby increasing the danger of nuclear war. The statement further alleged that the Soviet Union in June 1959 had refused to supply an atom bomb and nuclear weapons know-how to China, and on the basis of this allegation launched a new violent denunciation of the Soviet Union. This denunciation equally failed to take into account the principled stand of the Soviet Union and the international communist movement (expressed also in John Gollan's Political Report to our Congress last April) against the proliferation of nuclear weapons. It also failed to take into account the indisputable fact that Soviet nuclear power is already sufficient to stand guard, and has consistently stood guard to protect the entire socialist camp, including China, against the threats of imperialist nuclear aggression. This is not only embodied in the Pact of Friendship, Alliance and Mutual Assistance between the Soviet Union and China, but was reaffirmed by Premier Khrushchov as recently as on February 27th, 1963, in his speech to his electors:

> "If an attack is made on the Chinese People's Republic . . . the Soviet Union will come to the rescue of its friends and deliver a crushing blow at the aggressors."

To refuse to recognise this is to fall away from the basic principles of socialist internationism.

But this allegation, dating back to June 1959, throws a flood of light on the concrete origins of the subsequent fantastic edifice of highly scholastic anti-Soviet "ideological" controversy, whose empty battle of abstract formulas, without facts, without evidence, without attempt at serious examination of any concrete situation (and offering the wildest absurdities as the supposed viewpoint of "certain comrades" without a single reference to substantiate the picture) could make no sense to any experienced Marxist. For Marxism is always concrete; deals with living concrete situations and problems; never plays with formulas in a vacuum.

The issues raised by the Chinese Government spokesman's statement of August 15th were dealt with in the *Daily Worker* editorial of August 16th.

6. The Fight for International Communist Unity

It would be premature to endeavour to predict the consequences which may flow from the present grave turn in this situation, whether in a sharpening of public polemic, which we would have been happier to see ended, or in diplomatic repercussions. But we adhere to the basic view, expressed in our Congress resolution, that the overriding aim of all Communists everywhere, and of our party specifically, must be, alongside firm and unwavering support for the line of the 81 Parties' Declaration and every action arising from it in response to the needs of the world situation, to exert all our efforts to resolve the present differences on a principled basis through

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

comradely discussion, and to restore and strengthen the unity of the international communist movement, which is the indispensable basis for the future of mankind. We are confident also that, despite the sharpness of the present difficulties, and the heat which has been brought into the controversy, the objective basis exists for such a resolution of the differences and restoration of unity. That objective basis exists because of the common aim of all communists in the service of communism; because of the common interests of the Soviet and Chinese peoples and all socialist peoples in the tasks of economic and social construction and the maintenance of peace; because of the common interests of all working people and opponents of imperialism and supporters of peace all over the world; and because internationalism and international unity is the indestructible life-giving principle of international communism.

But at the same time we must, in all humility, warn our Chinese comrades, at the same time as we honour their revolutionary achievement and pledge our unswerving solidarity and support to them against every attack of imperialism, that language of wild and irresponsible slander of the Soviet Union as betraying socialism, or of veteran honoured working class fighters like Maurice Thorez as a robot jumping at the command of the marshal's baton of orders from Moscow—language hitherto only found in the lowest gutter anti-communist press—will not assist the presentation of their case, but will only close the ranks of the entire international communist movement like a rock against such a presentation, and against any attempt at factionalism based on such a presentation.

Meanwhile within our Party it is necessary for our members to reach a full and clear understanding of the issues in discussions in the Party on the basis of our January 12 Executive Committee Statement and our 28th National Congress Resolutions, and in the schools and study groups on the basis of the syllabus *Communism and the World Today*; to resist all attempts at factionalism, and refuse to allow our party to be divided, or the splendid growth of these recent years to be destroyed, by the impact of this phase of problems and differences arising within the international communist movement; and to carry forward our urgent tasks in Britain for the further advance and strength of the party and of the whole working class movement and peace movement.

We reaffirm our confidence that, despite the sharpness of the present differences and the obvious calculations of the enemy to exploit a rift or openly express the aim of isolating China, the deep underlying unity and friendship of the Soviet and Chinese peoples and all socialist peoples will prevail and prove indestructible. We are confident that the unity of the international communist movement, which has known difficult times before and emerged the stronger, and which is the most precious treasure of mankind to ensure the advance to the victory of peace and the future of communist society, will in the end, whatever the passing tempests and ordeals we may still have to pass through, prevail and be restored and strengthened and go forward to new triumphs. We pledge all the efforts of our party to serve these aims.

Catholics and Communists

William Wainwright

THE general outlook of Pope John's Encyclical, *Peace on Earth* (*Pacem In Terris*), as well as many of the specific ideas it contains represents a big and welcome change in official Catholic thought compared with the past.

It is a call to all people of good will to co-operate to rid the world of nuclear war, and it includes non-believers as well as believers in its appeal. It expresses the need for a dialogue with the socialist world and for a spirit of conciliation with it on key issues before mankind today.

War and Peace

On the key issue of war and peace the encyclical categorically states that "it is hardly possible to imagine that in the atomic era war could be used as an instrument of justice".

It rejects the arms race, calls for disarmament with effective controls, and the banning of nuclear weapons, and declares against nuclear tests for military purposes which "will have fatal consequences for life on the earth". It expresses the hope that disputes between States will be settled

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by the method of negotiation instead of recourse to arms.

It holds that "relations between States should be based on freedom, that is to say, that no country may unjustly oppress others or unduly meddle in their affairs", and thus, in effect, expresses itself strongly against colonialism, racialism and ill-treatment of minorities.

Relations with Non-Catholics

In speaking of relations between Catholics and non-Catholics in social and economic affairs, Pope John refers to the "historical movements" which are characteristic of our age, and while having philosophical teachings of which Catholics disapprove, nevertheless "contain elements that are positive and deserving of approval".

This is a reference to Communism, not only in the countries which have built socialism or are building it, but to the Communist movements in the capitalist countries which are working for similar ends.

In this same section, Pope John declares that the principles outlined in the Encyclical:

> "provide Catholics with a vast field in which they can meet and come to an understanding both with Christians separated from this Apostolic See [i.e., non-Catholic Christians] and also with human beings who are not enlightened by faith in Jesus Christ, but who are endowed with the light of reason and with a natural and operative honesty".

Another passage emphasises this: "a drawing together or a meeting for the attainment of some practical end, which was formerly deemed inopportune or unproductive, might now or in the future be considered opportune and useful".

This part of the encyclical is the newest element in Pope John's thinking and in it he draws a distinction between what the Catholic Church considers to be philosophical and religious error, and "the person who errs", and applies this distinction as I have shown also to movements which play a role in the world today.

A Great Change

The Pope advises that relations should be established with these men and forces, that these relations should be based on mutual respect, and that they should engage in a dialogue to promote co-operation in dealing with the pressing problems of the times.

This of course is a vast change from the days when a Pope could describe Communism as the greatest menace to Christian civilisation. For example, in the Encyclical by Pope Pius XI (*Divini Redemptoris*, 1937), Communism is denounced as something:

> "threatening to reduce whole nations to a state of barbarism worse than that which prevailed among most peoples before the coming of the Redeemer . . . bolshevist communism, atheistic communism, whose one aim is to upset completely the ordered structure of society and undermine the very foundations of Christian civilisation".

A section of that Encyclical was headed, "Communists not to be trusted or helped".

That was the period of the rise of fascism, of the war in Spain, of Hitler's preparations for the second world war. Of course this attitude helped the rise of fascism, and a lot that has happened since has proved how terribly wrong such an attitude towards the Communists was.

Nevertheless it persisted after the war as well, and one of the most important and far-reaching changes which the encyclical *Peace on Earth* has made is its change of attitude to the policies of the cold war and crusade against Communism.

Writing in the *Sunday Telegraph* under the heading "Cold Warriors Lose Their Chaplain", Douglas Brown was of the opinion that a new phase of the cold war had begun because:

> "the amazing Pope John, in the encyclical *Pacem In Terris*, had resigned his position as ex-officio Chaplain General to the West. He had withdrawn his blessing from the greatest crusade in history. Remaining implacably opposed to Communist doctrine, he yet included Communists among the 'men of good will' to whom he was appealing under the natural law." (21.4.63).

In the *Saturday Observer*, Norman St. John Stevas wrote:

> "The effect of Pope John's encyclical on the state of the cold war will be profound. It marks the end of the close sympathy and friendship with the United States which has been a principal feature of Vatican policy since the war and which was symbolised in the personal friendship of Pius XII and Cardinal Spellman."

Pope John has died since his encyclical was published, and his place has been taken by Paul VI. There was, naturally, some speculation whether the new attitude would be continued under the new Pontiff.

Many signs of change were noted long before the encyclical itself was produced. The latter summed up and made these changes far more precise, embodying them in a comprehensive statement of Catholic attitude to the modern world. The new Pope is—as *The Times* described him—"the declared heir of (John's) policies" and Dr. J. C. Heenan, the Roman Catholic Arch-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bishop of Liverpool, has declared (*Sunday Times*, 22.6.63) "There never was any real danger" that a successor would be sought who would reverse Pope John's policies.

The speculation has arisen partly because of the history of the Catholic Church, and partly because *Peace on Earth* caused such an uproar amongst reactionaries the world over.

Characteristics of the Present Day

But by far the most important reasons for hope that the changes are lasting are given in the encyclical itself in striking passages whose significance has not received very much comment. These passages occur in a section headed "Characteristics of the Present Day" in which the Pope shows that "the working classes have gradually gained ground in economic and public affairs" and "today, therefore, workers all over the world refuse to be treated as if they were irrational objects without freedom, to be used at the arbitrary disposition of others. They insist that they be always regarded as men with a share in every sector of human society."

He declares "it is obvious to everyone that women are now taking part in public life . . . they will not tolerate being treated as mere material instruments, but demand rights befitting a human person both in domestic and in public life".

And finally:

> "the modern world, as compared with the recent past, has taken on an entirely new appearance in the field of social and political life. For since all nations have either achieved or are on the way to achieving independence, there will soon no longer exist a world divided into nations that rule others and nations which are subject to others.
>
> "Men all over the world have today—or soon will have—the rank of citizens in independent nations. No one wants to feel subject to political powers located outside his own country or ethnical group. . . . On the contrary the conviction that all men are equal by reason of their natural dignity has been generally accepted."

Why the Change?

Add to that Pope John's reference to Communism—the "historical movements" of our age—and to the feelings for peace amongst the peoples, and we have a description of a new world and a development of the new powerful and progressive forces in it which the Catholic Church like all other movements must recognise.

The Times (4.6.63) put the matter in this way in an editorial: "The Papacy, as any body must be which had endured nearly 2,000 years, is a conservative institution. But it has been conserved only because from time to time it has deliberately chosen to take a broad, fresh look at the world in which it lives and to reapply doctrine in the light of what it sees. This is what Pope John undertook." This, however, is by no means the whole picture. It is not *simply* that steps have been taken so that the Papacy can survive. The all-important thing to assess is the character of the steps that have been taken.

The political and social content of the steps the encyclical considers to be necessary to face the facts of the modern world are of a progressive character, which can help humanity to remove the danger of nuclear war and end the arms race. They point in the direction of peaceful co-existence. They include an acceptance of the need to come to terms with Communism, to live with it, while arguing with it. It turns away from the cold war crusade against Communism as this leads to suicide.

Thus the encyclical proves the powerful effect on world institutions of the change in the balance of forces referred to in the documents adopted at the two international communist meetings in 1957 and 1960. This change has come about because of the growth of the various movements to which the Pope refers, the enhanced place in society demanded by working people, the imminent end of colonialism and so on. These are the facts of the modern world which give Communists the confidence that the aims of peace and world disarmament are not the dreams of visionaries, but are practical and realisable in our time.

Millions of Catholics the world over, in capitalist and socialist countries, have already been thinking and acting on lines such as those suggested by the Pope in his encyclical. The most striking examples are in Italy where ordinary Catholic men and women are not only supporters of the Communist Party but actively co-operate with it. Examples can also be given from France, especially more recently in the trade union movement. In a socialist country, Poland is the example that comes to mind.

The encyclical, therefore, has strengthened and clarified progressive Catholic trends for peace, social advance, democracy and national independence.

Struggle Continues

Of course it does not follow that the leading Catholic statesmen and politicians will follow the Pope's advice or that the battle on the encyclical in the Catholic hierarchy is over.

Vatican Radio, on August 1, broadcast a bitter attack on Communism declaring that no easing

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of international tension could allow a change of attitude by Catholics to Marxism and Communism.

The battle to get genuine co-operation will be a hard one and will encounter fierce opposition amongst many in the Catholic hierarchy. In addition Catholic politicians will continue the familiar cold war policies whatever a Pope says. It will take more than an encyclical to change the policies of Catholic Adenauers and the West German militarists.

Only mass pressure will force a change in their attitudes.

But there can be no doubt that the encyclical will on the one hand make it easier for those wishing to adopt a progressive line to do so by giving them support in advance and assuring them of considerable mass support from Catholics and non-Catholics alike, while those who continue to cling to reactionary policies, dictatorship, repression, cold war crusades and the arms race will find themselves in greater difficulties with Catholic as well as other people.

Thus President de Gaulle, a Catholic, intends to go ahead with nuclear tests despite world opinion and the Pope's warning against their continuance. Once upon a time he might have tried to invoke some sort of moral or religious justification for testing nuclear weapons on the grounds that these were needed in the anti-Communist crusade. But now this religious pretext is removed and in France there can be no doubt that large numbers of Catholic people will be joining with greater strength than ever with all others to try to bring about a cessation of the French tests as they now have the highest Catholic authority supporting them. Furthermore it becomes more possible for the Catholics to join their forces with non-Catholics in these great aims.

However, although the encyclical provides counsel and encouragement, it cannot of itself produce the results its author devoutly sought—peace, abolition of nuclear weapons, disarmament, and so on. The results, the aims, can only be achieved by men and women working in co-operation, discussing and taking political and economic action.

We Communists have always worked for peaceful co-existence and for co-operation of all men of good will to abolish war and nuclear weapons, to achieve general disarmament, for the emancipation of the working class, the freedom of all peoples and Socialism as the next big stage on the road to Communist society. Therefore we welcome the positive proposals of the encyclical for a dialogue and co-operation.

Principled Co-operation

There are many fields in which we believe steps could be taken with great benefit to strengthen peace, improve relations between the nations and to assist the working people to advance in dignity and social standards.

In Britain the striving for peaceful co-existence takes the form of developing the greatest possible pressure to pull Britain out of the nuclear arms race—which means ending foreign bases here, renouncing nuclear weapons, and breaking free from the grip of the cold war alliance with the U.S. so that this country can play a true part in international affairs working for a disarmament agreement. How can the British people be free and independent, when there are in this country nuclear weapon bases controlled by a foreign power whose decisions can put an end to all life in this country? The presence of these bases have been opposed on these grounds by the Communists ever since they were installed. Should not all Catholics now devote themselves to these aims too?

But it is not only a question of each political or religious group working independently, important though this is as a first step. What is essential is that there should be co-operation. Therefore in the trade unions should it not be possible for co-operation between Catholic and Communist and all trade unionists for these peace objectives? Certain Catholic trade union leaders with a Right Wing outlook have in the past considered themselves to be doing the will of their Church in carrying out a crusade against Communist trade unionists. Can they claim this now?

In this new situation, there will need to be a lot of new thinking, if the co-operation envisaged is to bear good fruit. In the encyclical Pope John says that care must be taken when there is a coming together, that principles are not given up. For our part, this is an approach we also agree with, for it is also a point which governs our own approach to dialogue and efforts in which work is undertaken jointly with others.

We will maintain our principles but we will and must do all in our power to co-operate with Catholics on all the vital issues on which co-operation is both possible and necessary for the peace of the world.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Chaos and Loneliness—

Modernism in Literature

David Craig

THE familiar phrase "modern art" suggests that there is something in art now that was not there before and probably something that most people (I mean literally most people) dislike. A few years ago the new element was often thought to be "distortion" or "obscurity". At present it is some such idea as "We are all lonely" or "Life is absurd". As early as 1915 D. H. Lawrence made the hero of his most comprehensive novel, *Women in Love*, say: "We are all different and unequal in spirit . . . spiritually, there is pure difference . . . In the spirit, I am as separate as one star is from another . . . " (ch. 8). This is proudly defiant. More often it has been said pessimistically.[1] In *The Waste Land* (1922) T. S. Eliot wrote these lines, shortly before the end with its imagery of neurosis and social chaos:

> . . . I have heard the key
> Turn in the door once and turn once only
> We think of the key, each in his prison
> Thinking of the key, each confirms a prison . . .

In his notes the poet explains these lines by quoting the philosopher F. H. Bradley: "My external sensations are no less private to myself than are my thoughts or my feelings. In either case my experience falls within my own circle, a circle closed on the outside."

Isolation

An extraordinary proportion of our literary arts since then has consisted of variations on this theme of irretrievable isolation. This is true of very different sorts of fiction, for example. The main sufferer in the symbolic novels of Franz Kafka (the novelist from Prague who wrote in German) gets no support or kinship of any kind from society, through which he moves in a kind of nightmare. John Dos Passos begins and ends his panoramic trilogy of America from the boom age to the slump with a single man hitch-hiking across the States, looking (hopelessly) for a job. In the last few years the highest *succès d'estime* has been going to playwrights such as Harold Pinter, whose characters pursue their own obsessions even when apparently speaking to each other, and Samuel Beckett, whose characters only just emerge from the dustbins and sandhills in which they live to communicate meaningfully with the audience.

This process has gone so far that it seems almost crass, or square, to speak up for the reality of human communication and of the feelings and experiences we all share as kindred creatures. Tennessee Williams writes in the preface to *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof* (1955), " 'We're all of us sentenced to solitary confinement inside our own skins.' Personal lyricism is the outcry of prisoner to prisoner from the cell in solitary where each is confined for the duration of his life." In the introduction to the third volume of *New English Dramatists* (Penguin, 1961) J. W. Lambert writes that in a Pinter play "As within ourselves, on the one hand open abysses of bottomless inanity, on the other loom the fearful crags of an irrational, implacable cruelty." To this it is surely not self-deceiving to rejoin that I, and you the reader, probably do not feel inane at bottom, and that cruelty in our century (as in any other) is far from irrational or inexplicable. But this rejoinder, though right, would not do enough to explain why so many people in our time, especially artists, have come to think that irretrievable isolation is the essence of human life.[2]

A recent almost self-caricaturing case of isolation literature suggests a clue—the play *No Quarter*, by Barry Bermange. It was written for the stage, yet takes place in total darkness—in a huge hotel with a blown fuse; hence its suitability for broadcasting (Third Programme last November). The *Radio Times* did its best to interpret: "If indeed 'some are born to endless night', their darkness may be social, political, religious." It is so simple, evidently, to typify all these sides of life by a quick symbol. Paul Ferris commented in the *Observer* (18.11.62):

[1] Compare "Sartre derives a philosophy of anxiety and despair from the absolute freedom of the individual on which optimistic philosophies were once based"—W. Ash, "Philosophical Revisionism": *Marxism Today*, July 1963, 215.

[2] Many more examples, esp. from Continental literature, and a rather *philosophical* explanation of the whole phenomenon can be found in George Lukàcs' *The Meaning of Contemporary Realism* (1963), esp. ch. on "The Ideology of Modernism".

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> Radio reflects intellectual pessimism more thoroughly than any other large-scale medium, probably because the core of intellectuals at Broadcasting House are left alone, without the pressures of success and daily public interest. Things are always blowing up or falling down in Third Programme plays.

This half-joke of Ferris's hints at one fundamental cause for the isolation and pessimism at the heart of so many poems, plays, and novels recently. The author who produces his book as a commodity never quite meets his public. In this sense he is isolated. Nowadays he is all the more convinced that those who hear him are few or cut off from him because he is bound to compete with journalists, pop-singers, advertisers, who sell to millions. Thus the writer who is not trying for a smash-hit—whose work is meant to reach more gradually into our minds or imaginations, may well despair before he has ever had a hearing. The excellent writers who have won a hearing in recent years have usually dealt with sex (Lawrence, Sillitoe), which must further discourage a genuine talent who is more concerned with other things. Overawed by his beleaguered position, the writer retreats into himself, and comes to assume that his isolation is *humanly typical.*

Dominating Cult

By itself this process—clearly inherent in the capitalist system of marketing art—might not have been enough so to establish isolation as the dominating cult. But it was inherent, too, in the social system, the division into classes. A. L. Morton refers to the "middle classes to whom even the idea of voluntary association is alien",[3] and this is a key point. The middle-class person, to confirm his position in the world, his success, his self-respect, wants above all to stand single. His house is at least semi-detached, and he will not have gone on the Council list for it. He will aspire to transporting himself singly to his place of work in his own car. He will think of sending his children to schools where they can get an education different from the average. In his very feelings he tries for separateness; togetherness would feel too ordinary, shabby, unsuccessful, "common" in both senses. To succeed is to differentiate yourself from the ruck by putting your own interests first. Most people nowadays are workers, in that they have nothing to live on but the sale of their labour-power, whether paid for in salary or in wage. Yet it is notoriously difficult to organise trade union activity among the sections who *feel* themselves to be "middle class", e.g. white-collar workers, for many don't want to acknowledge that their situation is shared with millions. Thus middle-class life actually is poor in images and types of the social, the shared.

All this does not mean that the average businessman, white-collar worker, or bungalow owner will readily recognise his own image in a novel by Kafka or Beckett or a play by Tennessee Williams, or that such social material will appear explicitly in the literature itself (although in notable cases it has, e.g. Arthur Miller's *Death of a Salesman*). It is rather that a position shared by many and, in competitive-bourgeois society, aspired to by many more, contributes to the social emotions that colour all our lives and thus (sometimes deviously, sometimes with documentary directness) moulds the image of life conceived by the artist.

Disruption of the Beautiful

If this explanation of the isolation cult is right, it should also hold good for that other aspect of modernism, "distortion" or "obscurity". It was this that hit people first. For most readers the idea that "modern poetry" is obscure, ugly, "not poetic" probably originates from a passage like the opening of Eliot's "The Love-song of J. Alfred Prufrock" (1917):

> Let us go then, you and I,
> When the evening is spread out against the sky
> Like a patient etherised upon a table . . .

Why did the poet choose that morbid, clinical image for a lovely thing like a sunset? Why did he (at the start of *The Waste Land*) call April the "cruellest month", when to old Chaucer in 1380 it was a time of sweet growth and refreshment after drought? Why did Bertolt Brecht, in a poem from *Hauspostille* (1927), write as follows about trees and birds: they belong to the country, surely they must be as lovely as the sunset?

> Toward morning the fir trees piss in the grey light
> And their vermin, the birds, begin to cheep.
> At this hour, in town, I empty my glass,
> I knock out my pipe and unquietly I sleep.[4]

Why, around the same time, was Stravinsky using discords as freely as harmonies in his music for the ballet *The Rite of Spring*, and why was Picasso sticking ugly, inartistic things like nails, brown paper, and newspaper headlines onto his paintings?

Modernism here strikes us as a deliberate disruption of *the beautiful.* Actually the dreariness of

[3] "The Arts and the People": *The Challenge of Marxism,* ed. B. Simon (1963), 139.

[4] "Concerning Poor B.B.": see *Selected Poems,* trans. H. R. Hays (1959 ed.), 15.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

many a daybreak is sensitively caught in Brecht's lines, the terror of barbaric ritual in Stravinsky's music, the flattening-out of stratus clouds at the day's end in the image from "Prufrock". Yet in the past artists had more often than not tried to create images that were not only true to their subjects but also pleasing in themselves. True, some previous "revolutions" in the poetic tradition had made an impact quite like Eliot's: e.g. Wordsworth's attempt, just after the French Revolution, to write poetry in "the language of conversation in the middle and lower classes of society"—

> And he is lean and he is sick;
> His body, dwindled and awry,
> Rests upon ankles swoln and thick;
> His legs are thin and dry.
> One prop he has, and only one,
> His wife, an aged woman,
> Lives with him, near the waterfall,
> Upon the village common.[5]

How uncouth this seemed to a public accustomed to a literature (from Dryden to Samuel Johnson) meant exclusively for the well-to-do and refined. Earlier, John Donne had deepened the love-poem by breaking the graceful flow of the Elizabethan songsters, e.g. lines that overturn Beauty as rudely as Eliot's "etherised patient":

> Busie old foole, unruly Sunne,
> Why dost thou thus,
> Through windowes, and through curtaines call on us?[6]

Neither in the 17th century nor the 19th, however, did the break with conventional Beauty last as long or disrupt as much as it has in our time. The Simon Lee material, for example, speedily got relegated to the novels of a Scott or Mrs. Gaskell, and the social novel was still considered a lowly form, hardly Literature at all. A shape-up as prolonged as the modernist revolt against conventional models of Beauty, order, and coherence must surely have roots deep in the common experiences of the writers and therefore of society. In fact modernism did appear towards the climax of the Great Unrest in Britain, when men and women were streaming into the unions as never before, the working-class was realising its own ability to seize the initiative (Labour Party, syndicalist movement), and the dockers and miners rose in the almost revolutionary wave of 1910-12. But this raw parallel between literature and history explains little by itself. Writers, artists, cannot necessarily seize on change as it occurs and, all at once, find the means of *transforming their art* to bring it abreast of changing life. The thing prepares itself more gradually.

Modernism in Poetry

In poetry, the tap-root of modernism was the work of the Welsh Jesuit, Gerard Manley Hopkins. Hopkins grasped and re-created language so that it became responsive to the deepest to-fro movements of conflicting impulses, as at the start of the sonnet "Carrion Comfort" (1885):

> Not, I'll not, carrion comfort, Despair, not feast on thee;
> Not untwist—slack they may be—these last strands of man
> In me or, most weary, cry *I can no more.* I can;
> Can *something, hope, wish day come, not choose* not to be . . .

Intense feeling seems almost bursting out of the five-beat line and ABBA rhyme-scheme—no false respect for regular form has stopped the poet from finding the rhythm really necessary to express his lurching from steadfastness to desperation. This style of Hopkins has been called (by F. R. Leavis in conversation) 'the revolt of the English language against Tennyson'. And Tennyson was then the lyrical voice of the Establishment, Queen Victoria's favourite, writing poems that dignified the feudal, ancient, and ceremonious. But it was not the reactionary side of Tennyson that stirred Hopkins to revolt—although in the year of the Paris Commune he did write a remarkable letter in which he looked forward, half in alarm half in hope, to "the Communist future".[7] What mainly stirred Hopkins was the struggle of his own feelings (as a priest sworn to chastity and worried that even his poem-making was a self-indulgence) to find expression at a time when poetry was supposed to keep a beautiful and unruffled surface.

This, however, does not exclude the social basis from the decisive causal role in forming the poetic tradition. For *why* was Victorian poetry lofty, unruffled, Tennysonian? Because it had to maintain its equanimity in face of the Bleak Age —the age of swarming slums, the ruining of rural Britain, armed struggle between workers and bosses. Even the first generation of Romantic poets (Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, Keats) had

[5] "Simon Lee", from *Lyrical Ballads* (1798).

[6] "The Sunne Rising", c. 1598, from *Songs and Sonets.*

[7] To Robert Bridges, 2.8.1871: "Horrible to say, in a manner I am a Communist . . . it is a dreadful thing for the greatest and most necessary part of a very rich nation to live a hard life without dignity, knowledge, comforts, delights, or hopes in the midst of plenty—which plenty they make." (*A Hopkins Reader,* ed. John Pick, 1953, 225-6.)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hankered to escape—to the countryside, the vanished England of the yeomen, the Mediterranean past. But this impulse was at least still fresh, it was still the cry of the working-people themselves (the dispossessed villagers petitioning Parliament against enclosures of common land and the drift of young folk to the towns). Whereas Shelley could reach his peak in response to the government reign of terror against the Radicals that culminated in Peterloo (1819), the second generation of Romantics never wrote a notable poem that was also Radical.

Poetry and the Social Movement

Poetry had found no way of associating itself closely with the forward social movement.[8] It turned into a backwater, as much in style as in content. The poetry of Matthew Arnold, for example, is a whispering of echoes from the great Romantics. "The Scholar Gypsy" (1853), one of his two key poems, is half a watering-down of Keats's "Autumn" ode, and here is the attitude to *modern life* on which it closes:

> O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
> And life ran gaily as the sparkling Thames;
> Before this strange disease of modern life,
> With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
> Its heads o'ertax'd, its palsied hearts, was rife . . .
> But fly our paths, our feverish contact fly!
> For strong the infection of our mental strife,[9]
> Which, though it gives no bliss, yet spoils for rest . . .

Thus our art-poets had turned their backs on most of the world they lived in. Contemporary experience and idiom were increasingly taboo for they would have brought in too disruptive (socially and artistically) a stuff. Even that traditional source for art-poetry, the people's songs, was closed to them, because Beauty was going from these too. The earlier industrial ballads have touches of the old rural loveliness. A coalminers' song:

> Ye see yon hills the sun shines on,
> The sun shines on sae gaudy,
> They are mine and they shall be thine
> Gin ye'll leave yer collier laddie.

A leadminers' song:

> The ore is waiting in the tub, the snow's upon the fell.
> Canny folk are sleeping yet but lead is reet to sell . . .

But as the grimmest phase of the Industrial Revolution came on, the songs became increasingly downright and punchy, hard, militant, driving the lessons home. A weavers' song:

> The hireman chiels they mock us and crack aye aboot's,
> They say that we are thin-faced bleached-like cloots;
> And yet for a' their mockery they canna dae wi'oot's,
> Na! they winna want the wark o' the weavers.

A miners' song:

> An' Seghill is a terrible place.
> They rub wet clay in the blackleg's face,
> An' around the heaps they run a footrace
> Te catch the blackleg miner.[10]

It was this *verse-tradition* that continued to grow and produce strong new work throughout the 19th century. But clearly it had nothing to offer the well-bred poet.

Hopkins was the first poet to break through the beautiful surface, but his *Poems* weren't published till 1918. By this time there had of course been other breaks-through, for this was the response of art to a group of powerful forces in society. The old poetry (as in Tennyson) had served to throw a lustre on the old hallowed values—the True, the Beautiful, and the Good, learning, the nobility and monarchy, the Church. Many Churches and crowns were shaken or went smash in the Great War and the revolutions that followed it. The appalling experiences in the trenches, the bestial squalor and slaughter, the idiocy of the leadership, made it impossible ever again to refer with quite the same assurance to the dignity of man, etc. The best documentary of that turning-point is Robert Graves's autobiography, *Goodbye to All That*, and in it he writes (reviewing the values of the men at war): "Patriotism. There was no patriotism in the trenches . . . Religion . . . not one soldier in a hundred was inspired by religious feeling of even the crudest kind."[11] Contemporary subject-matter burst into poetry in the form of satire (Siegfried Sassoon), including an attack on the old ruling-class as represented by the Higher Command and the Staff Officers. It is equally significant that the two finest British war-poets,

---

[8] E.g. see V. G. Kiernan, "Wordsworth and the People", in *Democracy and the Labour Movement*, ed. John Saville (1955), esp. 263-8.

[9] Compare Blake in 1804:
"I will not cease from Mental Fight . . .
Till we have built Jerusalem."

[10] The songs are: "The Collier Laddie" (Scotland, 18th c.); "Fourpence a Day" (Teesdale, mid-19th c.); "The Wark o the Weavers" (written for Forfar Weavers' Friendly Soc. annual meeting, early-mid 19th c.); "The Blackleg Miners" (Durham coalfield, c. 1890's).

[11] 1929 ed., 240-1.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Isaac Rosenberg and Wilfred Owen, both broke with Beauty and took to abrupt irregular rhythms or imperfect rhymes in the poems they wrote amongst the mud and gunfire at the Front. Brecht, who saw deeper into both literary and social processes than any other modern writer, was conscious of this function of irregular rhythm. He believed that "the oily smoothness of the usual five-foot iambic metre" could not suggest contradiction, struggle, violence. With characteristic self-criticism he is even ironic about this modernism:

> In my poetry a rhyme
> Would seem to me almost a presumption.
> In me are contending
> Delight at the apple tree in blossom
> And horror at the house-painter's speeches.[12]

Escape from Squalor

Even before the War modernist poetry had been trying to regain touch with contemporary life. The Imagists believed in stripping poetry down to sheer stark images—no padding, no woozy meditating on this or that. One of them, T. E. Hulme, whose friends alleged that he was a genius, published his *Complete Poetical Works* when he was 30—five poems totalling 33 lines. They include this—"Autumn":

> A touch of cold in the Autumn night—
> I walked abroad,
> And saw the ruddy moon lean over a hedge
> Like a red-faced farmer.
> I did not stop to speak, but nodded,
> And round about were the wistful stars
> With white faces like town children.[13]

Likening the stars to slum kids is meant both to displace the old mysterious poetic stars and also to tickle our social consciences a little. But not enough—"wistful" is weak and Nineties-ish, and not all that typical of slum children. This image, in fact, stops so short of the really revolutionary—of whole-hearted concern with the exploited people—that we suspect Hulme of wanting only to shock a little, *pour épater le bourgeois*. This is a small example of a modernist weakness—getting no further than making an aesthetic (or even moral) scandal for the kick of it: the Dadaists and surrealists, the *avant garde* films of Cocteau, Dali, Bunuel, Francis Bacon's wilfully vague yet nasty paintings, the theatrical surprises that Harold Pinter springs so artfully (e.g. the assault on the coloured man at the end of *The Room*). In this respect modernism deserves the severe criticism Plekhanov made of an earlier movement to disrupt conventional Beauty. Théophile Gautier in mid-19th century France wanted to split off art from the bourgeois belief in the useful and improving:

> No, you fools, no, you goitrous cretins, a book cannot be turned into gelatine soup, nor a novel into a pair of seamless boots . . . By the intestines of all the Popes, future, past and present: No, and a thousand times no! . . . I am one of those who consider the superfluous essential; my love of things and people is in inverse proportion to the services they may render.

Plekhanov comments (and I am sure that, as long as there is bourgeois society, there will be similar waves of modernism for his judgement to apply to):

> . . . the romanticists really were out of harmony with their bourgeois social environment. True, there was nothing dangerous in this to the bourgeois social relationships. The romanticist circles consisted of young bourgeois who had no objection to these relationships, but were revolted by the sordidness, the tedium and the vulgarity of bourgeois existence.

The new art was their (perfectly selfish) escape from squalor and tedium.[14]

The habit of using startling contemporary material merely as a tool to prick sluggish literary taste is one thing that makes our modernist poetry finally unsatisfactory. No-one in English poetry has caught the shabbiness of the industrial town in images as vivid and typical as Eliot's:

> Wipe your hand across your mouth, and laugh;
> The worlds revolve like ancient women
> Gathering fuel in vacant lots.
>
> A broken spring in a factory yard,
> Rust that clings to the form that the strength has left
> Hard and curled and ready to snap.[15]

Yet the rhythms here are dead—deliberately so; the poet sees no potential of movement forward anywhere in his society. He evokes it only to write it off. In his major poem on this phase of civilisation, *The Waste Land*, every ounce of his skill in evocation, mimicry, and contrast is used to pass off his own version of hopelessness as objectively typical of modern life—life without God or the aristocracy — and its inferiority to societies that have gone for ever.

---

[12] John Willett, *The Theatre of Bertolt Brecht*, 94, 99.

[13] Frinted in Ezra Pound's *Personae* (1952 ed.), 260.

[14] *Art and Social Life* (Moscow ed., 1957), 157, 159.

[15] "Preludes" and "Rhapsody on a Windy Night", from the *Prufrock* vol.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Two Sides of Modernism

This double face of modernism—both loathing "modern life" and yet trying to create comprehensive images of it in all its mixture of backwardness, advance, and giddy change—is discussed at length by Stephen Spender, a second-generation modernist himself, in his recent *The Revolt of the Modern*. The book is for the most part hopelessly loose, vague, and self-contradictory; in particular Spender seems at times unable to stop himself falling for his subject, endorsing its values and methods, more than he had meant to. The most important point that this garbles is whether the disruptive side of modernism (the dropping of normal prose logic in Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* or of consecutive argument in Pound's *Cantoes*) is necessary to reflect the disruptions in society: war, revolution, unprecedented social mobility, cultural minglings, and fast technical change. This is a matter that our writers usually discuss pessimistically, as they do our individual "loneliness". Spender refers constantly to the "confusion of values" in our time, sometimes as though just paraphrasing, sometimes taking over other men's pessimism as unquestionable truth. This pessimism certainly is a basic attitude in the modernist movement. When Eliot reviewed Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922) in *The Dial* he interpreted its constant bewildering shifts from modern reality to ancient myths as "perhaps the only feasible method" of giving shape to "the immense panorama of futility and anarchy which is contemporary history" (Spender p. 208). This is also the message of *The Waste Land* and is what induces so many liberals to take up that phrase, "the waste land", as though it were the obviously fitting name for the real world of today. Consider the following comment on *Ulysses*: "The whole picture of Dublin which Joyce presents is of a society in hopeless disintegration extended between two masters—Catholic Church and British Empire—which exploit and ruin it. The family unit is as far decomposed as any other". Normally a critic who wrote that would then pass over into taking this particular (perhaps distorted or eccentric) vision of life, in this one novel, as a true picture of our whole society. In fact the comment is from Arnold Kettle's *Introduction to the English Novel,* 2, and he is almost alone in not making this pessimistic assumption. Later he writes that "there is more of the essential feeling of the relationship of man to man and man to society in a great urban centre in the public-house ballad 'I belong to Glasgow' than there is in *Ulysses*."

This admirably pin-points the fallacy of arguing from an art of anxiety and dissonance to society as a whole. If, for example, the family unit in Dublin had decomposed by the 1920's, how would we account for the picture of a staunch and lively working-class family that Dominic Behan gives in his memoirs of Dublin in the Thirties, *Teems of Times and Happy Returns*? The truth is this: If your art is all discord, or your criticism reads this straight back into society, you are blindly unaware of (or deliberately hostile to) the constructive elements emerging (above all from the working-class and its movement) even in the midst of what seems like chaos to a conservative.

Thus when Eliot says that one of the three themes in section V of *The Waste Land* is "the present decay of Eastern Europe", we should reply that eastern Europe was decaying only for the Tsars and the Hungarian feudal tyrants. Yet this answer would be rather negative if we couldn't also mention memorable literary work showing that socialism is fertile enought as a way of life and thought to form the imagination of writers fully as alive to contemporary life as the modernists. Let me approach this *via* the question of why modernism has tailed off. Spender repeatedly raises this but by the end has hardly answered it. E.g. he takes up Matthew Arnold's notion that the Romantics did not "know enough" in the way of current thinking and suggests that somehow modern ideas have been indigestible for the artist (pp. 250-2). Yet think how Hardy absorbed Darwin on evolution, how Lawrence absorbed Freud on sex and personality, how Brecht absorbed Marx on dialectics, capitalism, and the class struggle. Spender's notion is only another form of the desparing idea that modern civilisation is uniquely unfavourable to art and to the sensitive soul generally.

Negative Approach

I should think that modernism tailed off (or rather, is still doing so) because its way of engaging on modern life has been negative from the word go. The only modern things that *can* seem interesting to the desparing individual are those that confirm and give picturesque form to his despair. You might think there is no reason why it should not have been the fertile side of modernism, e.g. some of its innovations in style, that prevailed. Brecht remained a "modernist" in his disruption of the conventional theatre—the use of documentary stills and slogans on the stage, the laying-bare of the mechanics of production, etc. But in his plays themselves, after the savoured decadence of *Baal* (1918) and the satirised decadence of *The Threepenny Opera* (1928), he turned to depicting with transparent realism experiences from the mainstream of life—in his adaptation of Gorky's *Mother* (1932), for example, or in

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mother Courage (1939). The second-generation modernists in England did attempt an early-Brechtian kind of drama that sprang out of the contemporary social struggle as directly as a slogan or newspaper. But they were never serious enough. Here is a typical rhyme from the Auden-Isherwood drama—

> One, two, three, four
> The last war was a bosses' war
> Five, six, seven, eight
> Rise and make a workers' state . . .

Brecht's stage songs are simple all right, but they never jingle by as glibly as that, like a political nursery-rhyme for precocious kiddies. Brecht was in earnest, concentrated, forced by the direst of struggles (the fight against Hitler) to compress his vision into the most unmistakable and common idioms, e.g. "In Praise of Learning" (from *Mother*) with its refrain *"Du musst die Führung übernehmen"*, "You must take over the leadership"—

> Learn, man in the asylum!
> Learn, man in prison!
> Learn, wife in the kitchen!
> Learn, man of sixty!
> Seek out the school, you are homeless!
> Sharpen your wits, you who shiver!
> Hungry man, reach for the book: it is a weapon.
> You must take over the leadership.[16]

In all Brecht's poetry, for the stage or not, we feel a bedrock of *common speech* and, underlying this again, unshakable fellow-feeling with ordinary people at work, struggling, keeping alive. By contrast the English Thirties poets were flirting with theories, playing games, social-slumming.[17] Their individual talents may have been weaker anyway, but there was also the difference in social situation. Our labour movement was far more confused than the German. In Germany a longer history of Marxist leadership, the appalling post-War slump and inflation, and the anti-fascist struggle had kept the Left strong (100 Communist and 121 Social-Democrat members out of c. 570 in the Reichstag the year before Hitler took power). The fight against war, hunger, post-War anarchy, and latterly against the Nazi thugs produced a situation in which the line for a humane artist to work on could hardly have been clearer. Hence the drama of Brecht, the satire of Karl Kraus, the drawing of George Grosz, the painting of Otto Dix and the Grundigs, the music of Hans Eisler. And in Italy there was Ignazio Silone, in the twenties a leader of the Communist underground against Mussolini, and author of one of the classics of socialist literature, the novel *Fontamara* (1933).

I am not proposing any law to the effect that only a strong fighting labour movement can underpin an outstanding modern literature; I am trying to find the causes for the specific values in Western literature being as they are at this stage. In America, labour could not shake the government any more than in Britain. Yet the twenties and thirties produced an outstanding school of novelists—Dos Passos, Farrell, Steinbeck, Hemingway. And the twenties and thirties in America had seen a struggle to establish the rights of labour like what had happened decades before in Britain—reigns of terror against the unions, near-civil war in some areas, *causes célèbres* which swung liberal opinion leftwards (e.g. Sacco and Vanzetti; cf. Peterloo or the Tolpuddle Martyrs). From this struggle sprang the art of the singing union-organisers—Joe Hill was the greatest; and new art-forms—the documentary theatre, Woody Guthrie's talking blues. Here was a radical-popular basis for literature akin to the songs, speeches, and broadsides which underlay, in England, such peaks of our classic literature as Shelley's 1819 poems and the social novel of the Hungry Forties and after, particularly Dickens.

Dos Passos had that basis; he also, a Harvard man, familiar with Europe, knew Joyce's fiction and the *avant garde* films and theatre. His *U.S.A.* thus attempted something beyond any British writer—the fusing of living popular techniques with the modernist innovations, the using of these innovations for a socialist literature. He did sacrifice depth to breadth—too many of his characters are interchangeable ciphers. Yet he drew an unforgettable picture of a whole society in flux with a socialist understanding of the forces conflicting in it,[18] and for this he needed some of the methods of modernism: free ranging in time outside normal plot; direct use or parody of language from any source, including the non-artistic; the sinking

[16] *Selected Poems*, 93.

[17] This criticism is made at length in an outstanding chapter of John Willett's *Brecht*, "The English Aspect": "our most gifted writers become autobiographical and soft-centred; they concentrate on style (or technique) to the point of affectation; they often go against the grain of our language by wrapping up their meaning or trying to pass off triviality as deep thought. There is a lack of toughness in their work, in many cases a lack of humour, too, and the spark that comes from contact with a wide public is lacking" (p. 220). Note only that the New Wave writers are making good much of this.

[18] See Edmund Wilson on Dos Passos: "[He] is now [1929] almost alone among the writers of his generation in continuing to take the social organism seriously." ("Dos Passos and the Social Revolution", in *The Shores of Light*, 1952, 435.)

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the writer's personal style in a medium aiming not at Beauty but at the imaging of an extremely complex social experience.

Reductio ad absurdum

The modernism which still flourishes with seeming luxuriance, which anti-Left critics still take for *the* growing-point of the arts, carries on from Kafka, Eliot, Joyce. Kafka in particular originated a literature of neurosis and psychosis—compulsive obsession that the sufferer is aware of but cannot stop, anxiety in excess of any distinct cause. The very form of his novels images this: *The Castle* could not have been finished, there could be no definitive order for the chapters of *The Trial* (both were published posthumously, against their author's wishes). The vicious circle has repeatedly been the form of modernist writing: the last sentence of Joyce's *Finnegans Wake* (1939) never ends but leads back to the beginning again; at the end of Pinter's *The Caretaker* (1960) the characters are still saying the same thing over and over again, still getting ready for something they will never do, like the characters of Beckett's *Waiting for Godot* (1955)—waiting, perhaps in the wrong place, for a personage they have never seen and who may not exist at all. Beckett exploits the vicious-circle form as a kind of instrument to torture his characters, and us, with a suspense that by definition can't be resolved. Every possible twist is given to this screw: even folk-song, always present in the new drama, appears in Beckett as the kind of children's rhyme that can't end—rewritten to be disgusting:

Vladimir:
A dog came in the kitchen
And stole a crust of bread.
The cook up with a ladle
And beat him till he was dead.

Then all the dogs came running
And dug the dog a tomb—

He stops, broods, resumes.

Then all the dogs came running
And dug the dog a tomb
And wrote upon the tombstone
For the eyes of dogs to come:

A dog came in the kitchen . . . [19]

The Pinter-Beckett drama (and Beckett novel) appear to be the fag-end of modernism. This vicious-circle form is the *reductio ad absurdum* of the isolation cult: the solitary individual finally is helpless to take one step out into shared life or inter-relationship from the position of pure privacy, which he knows all too well. This is also a judgement of quality. In these playwrights we see concern with technique working almost in a void. The eye of a Pinter or Beckett is more on the exact working of this or that device—the repetition, the pause, the *non sequitur*—than on the expressiveness of this in relation to the experience itself. It is because content is so ingrown, so reduced to the repetitive or inert, that technique can get the upper hand. Behind each Pinter play there lies the skeleton of a more realistic work. Passages of *The Birthday Party* contain the bones of the political thriller, with tracking-down and interrogation; *The Dumb Waiter*—the gangster murder-story; *The Room* and *The Caretaker*—the social drama (old age, housing problems, race-hate).

I am not saying Pinter "should have been" more of a realist—plainly it isn't his *métier*. But his technique suggests a belief that the "essence" of an experience or situation matters more than the substance of it as we meet it in life, or an aesthetic theory that the meaning of a situation can be imaged more vividly when stripped as far as possible of the bristling material detail, the "accidental" circumstances, that belong to it in practice. To justify this as a fruitful soil for art, his work would have had to be much less monotonous, as would Kafka's or Beckett's—less of a colourless fabric which barely varies from work to work despite nominal differences of character, situation, etc.

Modernism—its Contribution

Modernism is far from a dead loss. It liberated Western writing from narrow old conventions, and even today work which has held thoughtful audiences in as strong a spell as *Godot* and *The Caretaker* have done could hardly be failing to strike chords in present-day living. To my taste Beckett is horribly stale, and all too obvious in his automatic deflation of every possible hope, virtue, or satisfaction. Yet the two recent dramatists I most admire have thought otherwise. Shortly before he died, it is said, Brecht was thinking of rehearsing *Waiting for Godot* with the Berliner Ensemble; and Arnold Wesker is on record that *Godot* was one of the things that stimulated his own trilogy: "Beckett seemed to be saying in an odd sort of way the kind of thing I try to stress in *Roots* about the terrrible lack of communication that reduces us to the rumblings of Lucky, the man in chains." [20]

This is a lesson in the unpredictable line along

[19] 1959 ed., 57.

[20] Laurence Kitchin, *Mid-Century Drama* (1962 ed.), 195.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which arts can develop. It checks any tendency we may have to a rather philistine impatience with the seemingly far-fetched. The socialist arts as a whole are perhaps learning this lesson today. The superb Soviet sculptor Ernst Neizvestny has gone to the limits of the lifelike in some of his memorials for war victims, and he has also shown interest in modernism. *Complexity* has always been a key notion for modernists (Joyce, Hugh MacDiarmid), and Neizvestny wrote recently in *Iskusstvo*, the journal of the Union of Painters: "The contemporary artist is a man whose view of the world is equal in its complexity to the contemporary conception of the structure of the universe." He was also reported recently to have doubts (regarding John Berger) whether "the move from Freudianism to sociology is a good thing in English art criticism".[21] I call this an interest in modernism because Freud, with his concentration on the depths of the individual psyche to the comparative neglect of everyday habit and social conditioning, is a typical modernist thinker—tending to get lost in the depths just as a too-sociological approach tends to stay on the surface.

Modernism has thus made its contribution, but at the expense of leading the arts into many a distortion and blind-alley. Today the most vital growth in our literary arts now seems to be in another direction. The play with songs, the colloquial novel and story, the radio-ballad—in these realism has triumphantly renewed itself. This was not foreseen by those who ten years ago still thought that imaginative prose could go no further than Joyce; that verse in drama had reached its last resting-place in Eliot's plays; and that the modernist vision of life as chaos was the only one that could be taken seriously by writers of our time.

[21] "Wanted—An Art of Ideas": *Observer*, 16.2.63; Stanley Mitchell, "Impressions of Russia": *New Left Review*, 18 (Jan.-Feb. 1963), 53.

COMMUNISM AND THE WORLD TODAY

Communist Party, 60 pp. — 1s.

This syllabus deals with the most important questions of theory and practice in the struggle for socialism, which are also at the centre of discussion in the world Communist movement.

The epoch in which we live; peaceful coexistence; the transition to socialism; the national liberation struggle.

For general reading, as well as study groups, the syllabus is likely to arouse very widespread interest.

Obtainable from Central Books, 37 Gray's Inn Road, London, W.C.1, or usual agents.

A Correction

Jack Woddis

In my article "Africa's One Party Systems", which appeared in the August issue of *Marxism Today*, where reference is made to the Marxist-Leninist parties in Africa (*see footnote, p.* 231), the name of the Sudanese Communist Party was mistakenly omitted, owing to one sentence from my original manuscript being missed by me in typing the final draft. The Sudanese Communist Party, which has been illegal for the whole seventeen years of its existence, is a product of the heroic struggles of the Sudanese people and leads the struggle for complete national liberation. It is a signatory of the Declaration of the Eighty-One Communist and Workers' Parties and its reputation stands high in the international communist movement. Those who were present in London at the 1954 Conference of Communist Parties from countries within the sphere of British imperialism will remember the moving speech read on that occasion on behalf of the Sudanese delegation. I would like to thank all those, including my friends of the Sudan, who have drawn my attention to the omission of the heroic Sudanese Communist Party in my article.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Discussion contribution on:

What Does Music Express?

Michael Short

SURELY the myth of Stravinsky's theories has been exploded long ago. This particular composer is well known for his mystical approach to music (and to life in general) and it is a commonplace that men who are adept at one form of expression are quite often inept in another. Therefore, any examination of Stravinsky's work should be based on his music and not on his writings about his music, for it is evident that apart from one or two exceptions, the majority of his work is deeply felt and has 'meaning' for the listener. How this meaning is achieved I will discuss below. To analyse vague philosophising rather than reality is essentially a non-Marxist approach. For instance, our estimation of the worth of the Conservative Party is based on its record in governing the country, not on its election promises.

Any consideration of the meaning of music should be based on a scientific view of its historical development and social function. In this context it is interesting to recall a recent criticism in the *Daily Worker* in which Stravinsky's work was described as moving towards 'anti-music'. This sounds like a term from a mediaeval theological flyting and can have no real relevance except to a nihilist attitude such as that taken by Cage. Stravinsky is definitely *pro-* not *anti*-art.

However, the fact remains that Stravinsky was right when he said that music can have no meaning in itself; just as a language can have no meaning in itself, except to those who understand its conventions. Thus Chinese makes nonsense to a Dutchman, for instance. It is these conventions that are important. The sounds of music have certain physiological effects on the human ear, which in turn produce responses in the brain (i.e. 'meaning') according to certain conditions. In general, music has meaning by association, information, or by imitation. The last category is obvious and does not require further discussion.

Meaning by Association

1. *Association.* Certain kinds of music are associated with certain events, ceremonies, or moods. For instance, a layman can always recognise a hymn as being religious music, merely by virtue of its musical style, which has become associated with religious worship. In films, sea scenes are often accompanied by surging strings with unison horns in the high register, and on television moments of tension in detective serials are appropriately scored by means of dissonant chords played by a jazz orchestra. All of these examples are conventions and are to a certain extent expected by the listener in order to emphasise the meaning of the scene he is watching. Note that in the last example the dissonance itself does not imply tension—it is only by association with the events portrayed that it has 'meaning' in this way. Oriental music seems very dissonant to Western ears, but does not necessarily imply tension to those who are familiar with it and know its conventions. It is a common belief that the minor key is the most suitable for 'sad' music, and the existence of much gay music in the minor and sad music in the major key is evidence of the fact that this is a mere convention having no basis in emotional experience, except by association.

Meaning by Information

2. *Information.* To understand the meaning of the music of a Wagner opera (leaving aside consideration of the vocal text) we are provided with lists of leitmotives and told what each one is meant to represent. This is meaning by information. Thus when certain themes are played we know that the music is signifying 'sword', or 'eternal longing', etc., which we could not necessarily have guessed by just listening to the music. In the same way in Indian classical music there are certain ragas which are to be played only at dawn, and the Indian musician would be disturbed if they were played at any other time. However, a listener who did not know that these were 'dawn' ragas would not be aware of this significance.

In a listening test, many children in a group correctly described the 'dawn' music from Ravel's *Daphnis et Chloe,* (a quasi-imitative piece), but they would not have been able to do this in the case of the Indian 'dawn' raga. There is no

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reason why the music cannot be enjoyed for its own sake, but the listening experience is much richer for knowing the intended meaning of the work: rather like recognising what an obscure painting is 'meant to be' instead of just looking at it for the sake of the forms and colours. Of course the method of meaning by information can be carried too far. The Renaissance polyphonists were fond of such devices as setting the word 'night' to music written in 'black' notation (e.g. crotchets, instead of say, minims), and hence conveying a meaning to the performer. The listener could never appreciate this device except by seeing the musical score.

Tradition

Thus we see that music has indeed a language of expression of its own, according to certain precepts. The avant-garde, in inventing a new musical language, have discovered that nobody else speaks it, and so seem to be talking gibberish. If music is to have meaning it must therefore have its roots in tradition, in the same way that a spoken or written language must. This does not necessarily preclude originality, as the example of Shostakovich shows. New conventions may be established, but they will only become meaningful by use within a traditional context and not by providing the listener with complex programme notes which he is unable to comprehend. Here it is interesting to note the emotional quality of certain types of music. The 'pop-song'. by making use of crude devices, obtains an effect of emotion in a short time, but this value is ephemeral, as can be seen from the ever-changing 'top twenty'. The 'classical' work however, may seem dull and turgid at first hearing, but with increased familiarity with the music and hence with its particular language, a depth of emotional feeling can be discovered which is far in excess of what the pop-song can provide, and much more lasting in its effect.

Alan Bush quotes Schoenberg's dichotomous statement on the meaning of music and states that its contribution is minimal. In fact, the statement goes a long way to clearing the atmosphere. What it says in effect is that there is some music which has extra-musical meaning and some which has not, and while it is true to say that music expresses human emotion, the latter is a very nebulous quality and can apply to music as well as to anything else. Thus one can have specifically musical emotions, for instance.

National Barrier's

One of the beauties of music is its power to transcend national barriers and speak to men of all nationalities. The attempts to force it into a narrow nationalist mould must surely be a retrograde move, for it is difficult to see how this is consistent with the international character of the progressive movement as a whole. Nationalism is a disease which has been responsible for many unpleasant things in the past. Don't let it infect our music.

However, many British composers have fallen down in the past in imitating latest Continental fashions and in the absence of a strong native tradition one cannot blame them too much, but here it is the fashion-following which is the fault, and a composer should not be prevented from making use of musical techniques of all countries and periods to suit his own particular needs for expression.

The Logic of Aesthetic Appraisal

Raymond Southall

Rationality and Analysis

IT is necessary to preface what I wish to say about aesthetics with the remark that I shall be concerned with the analysis of aesthetic appraisals. The necessity for open avowal and subsequent apologetic is not one that I would have recognised had it not been drawn to my attention by John Lewis in his book *Marxism and the Irrationalists*. Lewis observes that,

> "Analysis would appear to be a 'sour grapes' philosophy, rationalising its own inability to think things through by denying that unsolved problems exist; or more likely a deliberate abstraction of the mind from reality under the cloak of sharpening the instrument of reason, thus diverting thought from dangerous problems" (p. 81).

Although it is an unfortunate fact that philosophical analysis, the application of logic to the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

language we use on certain special occasions, has been largely developed and monopolised by British empiricists, it is no more a "philosophy" than is logic itself. It might well be described as the technology of informal logic. Lewis is not only wrong in asserting that analysis is a philosophy, he is also wrong in claiming that it denies that unsolved problems exist. The fact that analysis seeks to clarify philosophic problems in order that they may be resolved does not mean that it refuses to recognise the existence of problems that are not philosophic. No analyst would claim that he can solve all of the world's problems; the most important function of analysis is to distinguish between problems that are *merely* logical, and can be resolved logically, and problems that can only be solved by changing the world. Logic, whether formal or dialectical, "merely" interprets the world, it does not change it. In so far as analysis does not recognise logical problems that are, in principle, insoluble it is at one with Marxism.

Having dispensed with the need to respect logic in argument, it is not surprising that Lewis should then go on to make such assertions as that,

> "by making experiences of the physical world subjective we make religious experiences as valid as those of the physical world" (p. 82).

This is a travesty of Marxism. Marxism maintains that physical objects have an objective existence, i.e., that they have an existence that is independent of ours. Marxism does *not* maintain that *experiences* of physical objects exist independently of us; on the contrary, experiences are subjective, they are our responses to objective reality. What then, according to Marxism, is the logical distinction between religious experiences and experiences of the physical world? It is quite a simple one: our experiences of the physical world have a *palpably* valid object, viz., the physical world, but religious experiences are purely subjective since they have no *palpably* valid object. It is, therefore, absolute nonsense to argue that because experiences are subjective there is no distinction between religious experiences and our experiences of the physical world; the distinction between the validity of one experience and the invalidity of another does not lie in the subject, it is not subjective, but in the object, it is objective. In recognising that experiences are subjective, therefore, Marxism does not ignore the fact that questions concerning the validity of experiences are objective and have to be answered objectively.

I have taken Lewis as an example in order to illustrate and to impress the need for Marxists to pay more serious attention to the value of philosophical analysis as a means of avoiding and detecting muddle-headed and anti-rational "thinking". In aesthetics irrationalism is so pervasive that a grain of reason is worth a cartload of aestheticians.

There are a multitude of theories which claim to deal with aesthetics and, so, purport to answer such questions as "What is beauty?" and "How do we know what is beautiful?" These reflect in their various ways that more general interest which ranges from the enthusiasm of Keats ("'Beauty is truth, truth beauty'—that is all Ye know on earth, and all ye need to know.") to the popular, idiomatic cynicism of "Beauty's only skin deep". It is beyond my competence, and your patience, to enter into a discussion of the varieties of aesthetic theory, many of which are not philosophic but psychological or sociological or a mishmash of the two. What I propose to do instead is to consider the common and necessary feature of all aesthetic discussion, namely, the language of aesthetic appraisal. In this way I hope to be able to deal briefly with the four most important questions in aesthetics.

What Makes Us Call an Appraisal Aesthetic?

The first of these questions, "What is it that makes an appraisal aesthetic?", is not a logically proper question at all. As with all apparently profound philosophic questions, it is logically inchoate, compounding together several questions that are logically distinct and which, therefore, have to be answered in very different ways.

To take the simplest question first. We may, in asking "What is it that makes an appraisal aesthetic?", wish to know, amongst other things, what makes us *call* an appraisal aesthetic. The answer to this is fairly straightforward. We call an appraisal aesthetic if it is couched in certain terms. It is because it incorporates such terms as "beauty", "ugliness", "prettiness", and so on, that we refer to an appraisal as aesthetic and distinguish it from moral, ethical and political ones. Since it is the function of such terms to define the kind of appraisal we make, they may be called logically definitive terms. And it is precisely because we do identify appraisals in this way that we encounter difficulties with certain kinds of appraisal. "It is good" may be taken as an example. "Good" is a term which may be used (say) morally, ethically or politically, and it therefore gives us no clue as to the precise kind of appraisal made by such a statement as "It is good". "Good", therefore, may be called a logically non-definitive term.

The answer to the question "What makes us *call* an appraisal aesthetic?" is, then, that we do so because it employs certain definitive terms. If

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

it does not do so we do not call it aesthetic and if it employs non-definitive terms we cannot know what to call it unless and until we are given additional information.

If it were not for the fact that confusion is apt to run riot in discussions of aesthetics, I would apologise for labouring the obvious. But in order to avoid confusion it is essential to state as clearly as possible how aesthetic are distinguished from other kinds of appraisal. It is because aesthetic appraisals are distinct that to say that a thing is beautiful or ugly is to say nothing about it politically, ethically or morally. When I say, "What a beautiful woman", I tell you nothing about her morals or her politics, in all probability she may be a perfect stranger to me, in which case I know nothing of her politics or her morals. This is an important logical point that must be grasped if aesthetics are to be discussed rationally; it does not follow that because we call a thing beautiful it is politically progressive or reactionary, morally strict or slack; it does not follow that it is politically or morally anything.

There is another reason for labouring the obvious and that is that it is necessary to distinguish between what it is that makes us *call* an appraisal aesthetic and why it is that we make such an appraisal. Why we *call* an appraisal aesthetic is a question concerning the kind of words or concepts we use in appraising, as we have seen, but why it is that we *make* such an appraisal is a question concerning the reason for the choice of those words or concepts. "What makes us choose to appraise aesthetically?" is, I believe, what most people intend to ask when they ask that logically inchoate question, "What makes an appraisal aesthetic?"

What Makes Us Choose to Appraise Aesthetically?

This second and more complex question appears to be asking whether there is anything in certain situations which requires us to make an aesthetic appraisal rather than (say) a political, ethical or moral one. In an attempt to answer this question two major types of theory have been advanced. What has been called the subjectivist account answers by postulating a special feeling, emotion or psychological state which, it claims, is what is signified by the use of aesthetic terms. The objectivist account, on the other hand, claims that what is signified by the use of aesthetic terms is certain qualities or properties of objects.

Neither of these accounts is satisfactory. The one argues that you make an aesthetic appraisal when you have a beautiful (or ugly, or pretty, etc.) feeling and the other that you do so when confronted by an object that has beautiful (or ugly, or pretty, etc.) qualities or properties. However, as neither feelings or qualities of objects come to us pre-labelled, how are we to judge whether this feeling or that quality of an object is beautiful? To this question neither account offers an answer.

Feelings and qualities of objects may provide us with the grounds upon which we base our aesthetic appraisals, but that is all that they do. When we say that a painting is beautiful, reference to its colour, its lines, and so on, merely indicates what our grounds are for considering it beautiful, but does not indicate why those colours, lines, and so on, are thought to be beautiful. Similarly, to say that this particular curve is beautiful because (say) it expresses an aspiration towards perfection is not to say why such an aspiration is considered beautiful. In short, if one attempts to extract an answer to the question "Why?" from amongst the grounds upon which an appraisal is based one is doomed to failure. There is a distinction in logic between the grounds for (or evidence in favour of) an aesthetic appraisal and the criteria according to which one decides upon the use of an aesthetic term (such as "beautiful").

Subjectivist and objectivist theories provide different grounds to support aesthetic appraisals, but neither theory offers a criterion for the use of aesthetic terms. However, the request for a criterion of the beautiful (to continue using the same aesthetic term) has never actually proved very much of a problem. Consider, by way of illustration, the mother who is asked by her child, "Mummy, what is beautiful?". The mother can reply by citing various feelings, objects, properties of objects (such as the smell of a rose), persons and relationships, all of which could be said to be beautiful. The child can then ask why she calls such-and-such a person beautiful. The answer would probably be something like, "Because she has a clear complexion, lustrous hair . . ." etc. But supposing the child is still not satisfied and demands to know why she calls those things beautiful. The child could go on asking such questions until the patient and clear-headed mother says, "Because that is how *my* mother (or someone) taught me to use the word," or "Because that is how I have come to use the word." Of course, the child can still ask her mother why she uses language in the way in which she has learnt to use it, but this concerns the nature of language as a means of communication and, hence, the necessity of language for social existence. The question is no longer a question of aesthetics. What this Socratic dialogue

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

between mother and child demonstrates is that a request for a criterion of the beautiful is a logically inchoate enquiry as to the way in which the word "beautiful" can sensibly be used, as to how we use it and why we use it in that way. No answer to such an enquiry is satisfactory that overlooks the fact that the word can be used sensibly in a multiplicity of ways.

But I think that the question, "Why do we make an aesthetic appraisal?", is something more involved than a request to be told the grounds of or the criteria for aesthetic appraisals. The question conceals a further question which might be expressed as "Why should we choose to make an aesthetic, rather than a political, ethical or moral, appraisal?" This is the most important of the questions raised because it concerns the importance of aesthetics. Another way of phrasing it so as to bring out this point would be to ask, "When does an aesthetic appraisal become important?"

When Does an Aesthetic Appraisal become Important?

An obvious answer to this question would be that it depends upon how important you consider aesthetics to be. Keats, in so far as he believed that "Beauty is truth, truth beauty" and that this is all you need to know, might well have said that the aesthetic is the most important appraisal to make in any situation. This kind of answer, however, ignores the fact that aesthetic appraisals have a logic and that it is their logic, and not the beliefs or feelings of the person employing them, that defines their importance.

Aesthetic appraisals, such as "This is beautiful", have an important logical peculiarity and that is that they are non-committal. When we judge politically, morally or ethically our judgements commit us, in principle, to a certain course of action. In saying that X is (politically, ethically or morally) good or, alternatively, bad, I am, by implication, committed to saying that I ought to do or to be like X or, alternatively, that I ought not to do or to be like X. For example, if I say "Charlie is good, but I ought not to be like Charlie" I am being illogical. In the case of aesthetic appraisals this is not the case and for that reason I have described them as non-committal. If I say "X is beautiful" or "X is ugly" I am not committed to any course of action whatsoever; as Kant put it, I am simply declaring "a delight or aversion". Aesthetic appraisals, therefore, are unlike moral, political and ethical ones in that they are *not* value judgements; they are statements of personal preference ("delight or aversion") and are of the same logical kind as such statements as "I like X" and "I dislike Y".

It is this logical characteristic of aesthetic appraisals that determines the importance of them. In order for an aesthetic appraisal to be important the situation in which the appraisal is made *must* (logically) be such that *only* matters of personal preference are involved. In a situation which requires a value judgement statements of personal preference (including aesthetic appraisals) are irrelevant. To say that you would like or would prefer to do X is irrelevant when what is in question is whether you *ought* to do X. Similarly, by the same logical ruling, whether you like or do not like X is irrelevant once the question of what you *ought* to like has been raised.

There may appear to be an exception to this last remark in the case of the hedonist, the person who accepts pleasure as the supreme good and whose motto is "Do what you like". But this exception is illusory. In answer to the question "Why ought you to be a hedonist?", the hedonist can only reply, "You ought to be because it is pleasurable" and this simply begs the question "Why ought you to do what pleases you?" To this question the hedonist can only reply by going outside the realm of aesthetics into that of morals, by moving, that is, from statements of personal preference to value judgements.

"Beauty is truth, truth beauty"

I take Keats' dictum as an example of an aesthetic appraisal because it expresses most succinctly the kind of thinking which leads to the pursuit of art for art's sake, or aestheticism. The title "aestheticism" is a misnomer, since the logical peculiarity of it is that it is not purely aesthetic, but a confusion of aesthetics and other kinds of logically distinct concerns. In the case of Keats' dictum this confusion is the result of compounding matters of truth and falsity with matters of personal preference. If I say to you, "This is beautiful", and you reply, "That is true", you use the word "true" simply as an expression of personal agreement and there is nothing logically impermissible in this. But it is plain, I think, that Keats does not intend us to understand his dictum in this way. Keats is surely not saying that no one can disagree as to what is beautiful; people do disagree on this matter. No, if Keats' remark has any importance the word "truth" must mean something more than this. "Truth" must be being used in a fashion similar to that in which it is used when I say "That is the truth" after giving a correct account of matters of fact (say, my movements yesterday). The logical difference between Keats' statement and a statement of matters of fact, however, is that the latter statement can

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be shown to be true as Keats' statement cannot. In this Keats' dictum shares the logical peculiarity of all appraisals and value judgements, namely, that they cannot be shown to be either true or false. Keats' confusion, therefore, lies in attempting to suggest that assertions about beauty (aesthetic appraisals) are statements about truth. Consequently, what is wrong with Keats' aestheticism is that it tends to reduce truth to a matter of personal preference in this way it ignores the existence of unpleasant truths.

In Conclusion

I have tried in a general way to deal with what I believe to be the four most important questions in aesthetics:

1. What is it that makes an appraisal aesthetic?
2. What is it that makes us call an appraisal aesthetic?
3. What is it that makes us choose to appraise aesthetically?
4. When does an aesthetic appraisal become important?

I have also tried to illustrate

a. the logical distinction between the grounds of and the criteria for such appraisals.
b. the logically non-committal nature of them and, consequently,
c. what distinguishes them from value judgements.

Finally, I have tried to indicate

d. what is wrong with aestheticism.

In doing this I have not been concerned with proposing a new, or for that matter championing an old, aesthetic theory. What I have been attempting is an indication of the sense in which aesthetic discussion is limited by the logic of aesthetic appraisal. It is in the nature of *rational* discussion that it observes such limitations, that is what is meant in calling it rational. How rational my own discussion of the limitations of aesthetic appraisal has been is, of course, itself a matter for reasonable consideration.

Satire—the New Revolt?

IT is excellent that *Marxism Today* is taking a look at popular satire, and we should be grateful to Mike Down for tackling this thorny subject in the July issue. Some of his comments, however, seem to me a bit flat-footed. In the first place, there is no substitute in criticism for considering the actual impact of the work on the critic himself. Mike Down barely gets around to this, though he tries to estimate its effect on other people. He gives us instead an analysis of the social origin of the satirists and the "curious" fact that their work is popular with the smart set. But is this so curious? Brecht's *"Dreigroschenoper"* (*The Threepenny Opera*) was a dazzling hit in the corrupt Berlin top-society of pre-Hitler days—but this does not prove it was bad satire. When a ruling class is very inept, corrupt and demoralised, many of its own members get a kick from the exposure of its absurdities. *"Death of a Salesman"* (Arthur Miller) was a biting indictment of the American dream, but also a great box-office success.

Middle Class

I have done a bit of social analysis myself, and have come to the conclusion that by the "Down test" *Marxism Today* (not to speak of the *Labour Monthly*) is "specifically middle class". It has an editorial board of fifteen, of whom 11 hold University degrees and one an art diploma. Of the eleven, according to my count, ten were at Oxford or Cambridge. Of twelve articles listed on the cover of Vol. 7, No. 7 for "August and forthcoming issues" at least eight have authors with University or equivalent education, very likely more. So what? I still think it is a Marxist journal. Actually, Karl Marx, Frederich Engels and V. I. Lenin were university types too. This is an unsound line of argument. *The question at issue is the social content of the work, not the social background or education of the writer.*

As a matter of fact, Mike Down is not even quite correct in his analysis as far as TWTWTW is concerned. If you observed the credit titles for the scriptwriters flashing past on the tape while you waited for the final punch-line, you often saw progressive names like Keith Waterhouse and Willis Hall, Kenneth Tynan, Roger Woddis, and a number of others. Indeed much of what Mike Down says is a good deal truer of *Private Eye* than of the much funnier TWTW—perhaps because it is easier to write from clippings than remembered TV sketches.

I write as a devotee of TWTW (the enormous viewing figures for which prove that it cannot be merely a middle-class taste, though at the start it was expected to be so). And I cannot agree with Mike Down's estimate of that, at any rate.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Take Royalty

Take Royalty, for instance. "These attacks are in no way Republican", says Mike Down. Among the programmes he quotes is the brilliant send-up of the Queen's Christmas speech, which showed it being edited and re-edited by the pencils of the Prime Minister and the Archbishop of Canterbury. I don't know what *would* be Republican satire—you could hardly show the hollowness and artificiality of this particular Establishment institution better than this, though Down says it conceals a "sneaking respect". And is it no service to Republicanism when all the Dimbleby-style commentaries on clamorous Royal occasions are exquisitely deflated, as in that superb eye-witness account of the sinking of the Royal Launch? ("I think I can lip-read what Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh is saying: "Oh dear, we seem to be sinking.")

Again, the consumer's report on Religions, faithfully modelled on *Which* and settling in the end for the Church of England as Best Buy ("you get a good little faith for a very moderate outlay") efficiently punctured the pompous "spiritual" shams used to support so many conventional Tory attitudes. Since the Socialist appeal is fundamentally rational and scientific, we have everything to gain from this kind of iconoclasm.

Mike Down complains, with much justification, that so many students (and Sixth Formers) use their energies collecting for charity, for hungry people, and not in political action to end the causes of hunger. All this has nowhere been more brilliantly shown up than in the little TWTW sketch of two well-dressed upper class gentlemen stuffing themselves at a charity lunch for a "good cause" whose precise nature they have forgotten, the good cause proving at the end to be "Freedom from Hunger".

As for politics: have not Harold Macmillan and Lord Hailsham been permanently knocked askew by the Wm Rushton/Roy Kinnear treatment? True, there was also an attack on the attempt to create a new "image" for the Labour Party ("Wilson Washes Whiter" Wilson isn't just something you Do—let Wilson Do You"). But does not the whole advertisers' approach to politics ask for this? As for the rather mild fun at the expense of Bertrand Russell and Canon Collins, I should not think that put off a single Aldermaston marcher. And how, to be frank, does Mike Down think the programme would have stayed on the air at all if it had contained no jokes, however feeble, against the Left?[1]

Of course, as Mike Down says, it's true that none of the satire under discussion offers or even suggests a positive alternative. But does most satire? Is that where people look for their positives? Of course, TWTW is not a substitute for the Communist Party, or even the Labour Party—why should it be ? What it does is to break down some of the taboos and conventions and reverences which close people's minds to what we have to say. If we want to win young people in C.N.D. for socialism we must work with them and explain to them—this is true of any broad movement—rather than complain because C.N.D. and satire, unaided by us, do not make them into Socialists and Marxists.

A Progressive Impact

Like other artists who begin by revolting against bourgeois society and its culture, the new satirists risk being adopted and corrupted by their very success in that society. That does not, I think, contradict the view that *at this stage* they have made on balance a progressive impact and certainly they have not played "a negative part in the movement for Socialism". But, of course, consciously Socialist satire could do more than this—Brecht has shown how much more. It would not get on the telly, but *Unity Theatre,* from "Babes in the Wood" onwards, has always has a success with its efforts in this direction. Working-class journalists like Dave Michaelson have shown something of the potential that exists in the press.

[1] The one consistently right-wing bit of the show—Bernard Levin—was rightly rated by most of the young viewers I meet—extremely unfunny. Their sentiments were roughly expressed by eight-year old Anita who wrote to say that she loved the TW and always stayed up for it, but as she did not like Bernard Levin she took advantage of *his* act to put on her nightie. However, I should judge that without Mr. Levin to pacify the Right, the rest of the show would have got by at all.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Songs of the Radical and Labour Movement

Stephen Sedley

THANKS to a couple of those chance discoveries that bedevil research into popular song, I find myself in the slightly absurd position of replying to my own contribution to this discussion (*Marxism Today*, August 1963).

The "Chartist" song *There's a Good Time Coming* turns out to be by Charles Mackay, and its original version contains eight stanzas in all, including this one:

> There's a good time coming, boys,
> A good time coming.
> War in all men's eyes shall be
> A monster of iniquity,
> In the good time coming.
> Nations shall not quarrel, then,
> To prove which is the stronger;
> Nor slaughter men for glory's sake—
> Wait a little longer.

Mackay published it under the title of *Wait a Little Longer* in his *Voices from the Crowd*, 1846. A third of the poems in this collection were originally published by Charles Dickens in the *Daily News*, though I have not ascertained whether this was one of them.

Strictly speaking *There's a Good Time Coming* missed the Chartist boat, but it became immensely popular, as few Chartist songs did. John Black, the editor of the *Morning Chronicle*, wrote to Mackay:

> I think I have heard during the last half dozen years [I can't find which half dozen he means] your song of "There's a good time coming" oftener sung by the people, than I have ever heard any one song sung during the course of my life.

By the time of his first visit to America (1857–8) Mackay's name had become so closely associated with his song that Oliver Wendell Holmes began his farewell ode to him:

> Brave singer of the coming time . . .

The nature of the song's popularity is also significant. While the sheet music of Mackay's hit song *Cheer Boys Cheer* ran through nine editions or more between 1854 and 1855 alone, I can find no record of the score of *There's a Good Time Coming* having been reprinted at all between 1848 and the 1870s. (D.N.B., which is unreliable at several points on Mackay and which gives a sales figure of 400,000 for this song, seems to be confusing it with *Cheer Boys Cheer* which certainly reached that figure.) It seems, therefore, that the song was passed on orally rather than via the drawing room piano—a sign of genuine popularity.

Charles Mackay

Mackay himself was an interesting man. He was a radical, and *Voices from the Crowd* is dedicated to his friend William Henry Ashurst, a lawyer who worked with Robert Owen, championed women's rights and defended many working-class leaders. Mackay, apart from being a poet, was a noted journalist, a philologist and a very able historical scholar. His best known book, *Extraordinary Popular Delusions*, has recently been reprinted and makes fascinating reading. He also did some excellent work for the Percy Society in the 1830s and edited the *London Prentices and Trades* section of Vol. 1 of their *Old Ballads* series. Another of his interests was the 12th-century popular leader William Longbeard. On the debit side, he refused to get involved in party politics and was often pretty woolly on current issues.

Most of his poems share the virtue I mentioned in relation to *There's a Good Time Coming*—they are not mock-literary. This means, luckily for Mackay, that the failures among them are merely trite, not disastrous flops. It also means that most of them lend themselves to musical settings, and it was as a songwriter rather than a poet that Mackay made his name.

During the 1850s, when he was editing the *Illustrated London News*, Mackay teamed up with Sir Henry (*Home Sweet Home*) Bishop to publish song supplements of Mackay's poems set by Bishop to old English tunes. But his most successful partnership was with Henry Russell. It was Russell who did the setting for *There's a Good Time Coming*, adding a four-line chorus to give it weight. He also set Mackay's *Cheer Boys Cheer* which earned the publisher a lot of money until it was pushed off the hit parade in the early 1860s by *Pop Goes the Weasel*; *Woodman Spare that Tree* by the American George Morris; and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A Life on the Ocean Wave by Epps Sargent. Russell himself made £2 out of *There's a Good Time Coming* and £3 out of *Cheer Boys Cheer*—this of course at a time when royalties were a vague transatlantic notion and publishers bought copy outright. The way Russell made his money was by performing his own songs to packed and enthusiastic audiences.

This was the song's background, but the metamorphoses it subsequently went through are also highly instructive, especially from the point of view of popular culture.

Variants

I mentioned one variant of the song in my earlier contribution—a comic music-hall version from 1851. Since then I have located three others.

One is a second comic version, printed as a broadside by Hodges (who functioned 1855–61), called *Good Time Coming, Girls.* Two of its better stanzas run:

There's a good time coming, girls—
A good time coming;
When flirting won't be reckoned sinning,
And caps cost nothing for the trimming,
In the good time coming.
Silk dresses will be had for asking,
And corset strings be stronger,
Oh! girls, you'll have a splendid time,
Just wait a little longer.

There's a good time coming, girls—
A good time coming.
Mothers then will frown no more,
When lovers kiss behind the door,
In the good time coming.
Fathers will not grumble then,
But wish the tie the stronger,
There's naught like this at present, girls,
But wait a little longer.

This was probably written for the printer; some of the lines are too much of a mouthful to sing. But the humour is saner and more genial than in the music-hall version.

Secondly, according to Harold Simpson's *A Century of Ballads,* Mackay's song became so popular that George Dawson used it in his Birmingham chapel as a hymn, with "yet" instead of "boys" to give a fitting dignity. Dawson was an immensely popular preacher (who refused to narrow his potential audience by being ordained) and a lecturer on history and literature. A pioneer of adult education, he was friendly with Mazzini, Kossuth and Carlyle, and went with Emerson to the Paris barricades in 1848.

Thirdly, J. P. Robson, "Bard of the Tyne and Minstrel of the Wear", wrote an adaptation of the song in Geordie dialect. Robson, who left school at 11, wasted a great deal of time writing pseudo-literary pieces, but also made creditable efforts to raise the status of the Tyneside, Northumberland and Lowland Scots dialects by translating, for instance, the Song of Solomon into each of them. I haven't been able to locate the full text, but Jack Lindsay and Edgell Rickword give these two stanzas in their classic anthology *Spokesmen for Liberty* (first published in 1939 as *A Handbook of Freedom* and containing, incidentally, Mackay's original opening stanza):

There's a grand time comin', lads,
A grand time comin';
When collier laddies needn't fret,
For landlords will our rents forget,
I' the grand time comin'.
No man shall ax us for his brass,
But myek our cubbords stranger;
Then corn shall be as cheap as grass,
Wait a wee bit langer!

There's a grand time comin', lads,
A stunnin' time comin':
A level's sure to come or nowt,
Smash, then we'll get what lang we've sowt,
I' the grand time comin'.
Maisters than will hae to put,
Nyen need fear thor anger;
Viewer's sons our traps 'ill shut,
Wait a wee bit langer.

In terms of class struggle, a lot of this is beside the point. Why "*his* brass" in the first stanza? And the last four lines aren't really worthy of a serious song (cf., "We'll make Lord Beaverbrook the *Worker's* office boy When the red revolution comes"). Robson seems to have had a tendency to strike poses without quite knowing why. (He wrote *The Pitman's Happy Times* without, according to one of Bert Lloyd's informants, ever having been down a pit.)

Which brings us back to Mackay and the soft centre of nineteenth-century radicalism. . . .

Published by the Communist Party, 16 King Street, London, W.C.2, and printed by Farleigh Press Ltd. (T.U. all depts.) Aldenham, Herts.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHALLENGE OF MARXISM

A week of discussion and debate

November 14th to 19th, 1963

UNDER THE AUSPICES OF

"MARXISM TODAY"

To show the contribution of Marxism to the problems of our time in the fields of politics, science and culture and in the battle of ideas.

To provide a meeting place where people of progressive ideas, Marxists and non-Marxists, can discuss a wide range of subjects and thus contribute to the advancement of our understanding.

Please fill in the form below

Please send me the programme of **Challenge of Marxism** Week, 14-19 November 1963.

Please also send me 'all-in' tickets* for which I enclose cash/PO/cheque for £ s.

*Each 'all-in' ticket costs ten shillings.

Name

Address

To Marxism Today, 16 King Street, London, WC2

AFRICA: THE WAY AHEAD

Jack Woddis

Following on from his two highly successful studies, *Africa: the Roots of Revolt* and *Africa: the Lion Awakes.*

21s.

THE TORY YEARS

1951-1962

Alan Brown

Reviewing the effects for the British people of Conservative government.

12s. 6d.

THE LABOUR GOVERNMENT

1945-1951

D. N. Pritt

The record of Labour's post-war years in office.

37s. 6d.

SOCIALISM IN BRITAIN

A. L. Morton

An essay in the development of Socialist ideas from the Middle Ages to the present day.

paper **5s.**

LAWRENCE & WISHART

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

common interest . . .

uncommonly interesting . . .

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

the monthly journal of Soviet views on today's fast-changing world scene packed with political comment and analysis

direct from Moscow to your mailbox

and a FREE GIFT of Soviet space stamps with each subscription

14s a year
21s for two yrs

CENTRAL BOOKS
37 Grays Inn Road London WC1

please send me INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

I enclose £.....:.....s for one year 14s ☐ for two years 21s ☐

please send me free catalogue of books ☐

NAME .....
ADDRESS .....
.....
.....
MI .....

Collet's

NEW PAPERBACK BOOKSHOP

The Best of the Paperbacks for Discriminating Buyers

289 HIGH HOLBORN
LONDON, W.C.1

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED